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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOP
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A Short History of the English People

By

John Richard Green

With a Biographical and Critical Introduction
by George Burton Adams

Volume I

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GREEN'S SHORT HISTORY

IT is doubtful if in the annals of historical literature is to be found another example of so rapid and so universal a success as that of Green's "Short History of the English People," or of a popularity so permanent, if we may allow ourselves to judge by the promise of permanence which it now gives after more than twenty years. Certainly a list of the compendiums or manuals of history would contain no other case like this. We do not look to such a book for literature, and we do not expect that people will read it because they enjoy it. But it has been no mere passion to learn English history which has exhausted edition after edition of this book. Nor was it the attraction of the author's name that made the book's success. It was the essay of a new man. Green had written many articles for the "Saturday Review" which had attracted attention, but they were all anonymous, and, though some of them had been attributed to famous men, they had given their author no fame. What he was, had been found out by a few intimate friends of his, — some of them historians, like Freeman and Bryce, who had been attracted by his occasional historical papers, some of them clergymen who had come into contact with him in his church work, — and one or two of these friends have recorded the fact that his sudden success was no surprise to them. But to the great mass of Englishmen who saw the announcement of his History, he was an unknown author. And yet the book was instantly taken up, 32,000 copies of it were sold in about twelve months, and by the time of the author's death, less than ten years after its publication, 86,000 copies had been called for in England alone, while on the continent and in America the sales had been proportionate for the whole

period. It is pleasant to remember that the income from these unexpected sales — for this rapid success was probably a surprise to the writer, whatever it may have been to his friends — was of especial value in relieving Green of troublesome burdens during his years of illness, and a welcome addition to the stipend attached to the honorary librarianship of Lambeth, which had been given him by the Archbishop of Canterbury when the failure of his health compelled him to withdraw from his strenuous parish labors. Since the author's death, in 1883, the demand has continued constant.

This is proof enough that the liking for the book was no mere freak of the popular fancy, which takes up without reason some idol of the moment, and lets it fall again as suddenly and with as little reason. Popularity is of course no true measure of any kind of work, not of the purely literary certainly, and least of all of the historian's, which lies in the borderland between literature and science. But if the success of this book was unparalleled, the book itself also stands alone. It was written to serve the purpose of a handbook, but it is a history. At first, when it became evident that here was something which the masses would read, many were disposed to question its solid character. Its author must be a mere popularizer. Such a book could not rest upon the foundation of first-hand knowledge. And there was some shaking of the head on the part of those whom we may in turn call the mere investigators, the men who overlook the truth — which every man who has felt the intense enjoyment of the search after and discovery of a fact is apt to overlook — that the work of the real historian is not complete when what actually occurred is found out, but only when this fact is so set forth as to put it in right relation to other facts, and to make it a part of all men's useful knowledge. But this doubt was for a brief time only. Not a few inaccuracies of statement were pointed out in the first edition, which were easily corrected. There were some instances of doubtful judgment, less easily changed, and less in need of it, for one valuable side of any man's work is his personal equation, his individual interpretation of the facts. The treatment was uneven because the author was less solidly grounded in some parts than in others. But he was clearly a scholar. Had

not "The Making of England" shown beyond dispute the characteristics of the careful investigator — the collecting and accurate balancing of evidence, the critical judgment of values (almost too narrowly critical at times in Green's case) and the guarded power to read beneath the surface — a careful analysis of the "Short History" would have revealed, and had revealed to many, the existence of these qualities in its author. It was a work, as any one who really cared to know could see, built upon a sound and detailed study, not equally profound in all its parts, but everywhere beyond that of the mere writer of a manual.

The popularity of the "History" was aided by another characteristic by no means usual in the handbooks of our school-days. With all detail necessary to give us the bearings of the progress from point to point, it combines the most wide and comprehensive vision of the subject, setting before us long periods or the entire history so that we see the whole as a single movement. The ordinary manual tangles us in a maze of special facts, and leaves the mind confused and lost, with no conception of the whole in which the parts belong. The philosopher gives us a general view, but with so little of the specific that our conception floats in the air with nothing to rest upon, and is of little value because it cannot be proved or disproved. Green does neither the one thing nor the other. He gives us a clear view of the whole, so that we see the history unfolding from age to age, and also detail enough to establish the general view in our confidence, but not enough to confuse our sight of it. It must have been that the whole path of English history lay before his mind like a single stretch of road, a long way, but perfectly distinct from the high ground of his survey from start to finish, and so seen that every step was as obvious as the whole. This is what he makes us see also, as far as we are able. I believe it to be beyond question that the man who can read but few books will get from this one such an understanding of the true course and meaning of our past as is not possible from any three or four others. The schoolboy who uses the book for the first study of English history is often disposed to grumble at the omission of details, or at least at the constant assumption that he is familiar with the skeleton of the his-

tory; but the man who comes to it with his school-days behind him, finds what he needs to give him a firm and permanent grasp of the whole.

But a scientific knowledge of the subject, even when combined with comprehensive vision and singular good judgment in the choice of details, does not make the chief characteristic of the book. It is much more than a bald history, and we must look to other features for an explanation of the phenomenal reception it met with. It was, in the first place, a piece of literature. It is hardly possible that Green thought of style as he wrote. There is no consciousness of it in the mind of the reader. There is no straining after effect, as in the writings of the stylists, who pride themselves on their power over words. The sentences read like the simple and natural expression of the writer's mind, but the charm is always felt, the more so because the art is not apparent. If we stop to analyze, we find at once both sides of the artist's nature. There is an instant perception of the dramatic and the picturesque in the plain facts which it is necessary to use, a quick eye for color and for the moving forces beneath the surface. And the other gift of the artist is also evident, the reproductive power, more difficult to attain in words than with the pencil, the ability, by a simple phrase or two, or by a single adjective, to make the reader see the picture, or the living force, or the dramatic turn which the artist caught at once. This double power is present on every page of the book. Let us take a few examples at random: "Through the same memorable night Edward was hurrying back by country cross-lanes to seize the fatal gap that lay between them." These few words, though we may know no more of the facts than they tell, give us a vivid idea of what the situation must have been. "It is this new gladness of a great people which utters itself in the verse of Geoffrey Chaucer." Within the compass of two sentences of five lines, so controlled that they do not seem to us overburdened, he thus characterizes Henry III.: "Profuse, changeable, impulsive, unbridled, reckless, an empty and prodigal magnificence, a dream of arbitrary power, frivolous mood, a weak man's obstinacy." "'God has punished us for our sins,' cries the chronicler of St. Denys in a passion of be-

wildered grief." And so on, page after page, with natural touches, and hints of contemporary emotion, and with brief turns of expression that put before our eyes the thing as it was, or as the men saw it who were then alive. It would be hard to find a sentence of dry detail anywhere. The facts are stated so that we know them as facts, and feel the stir and action of the time that made them.

Yet, when we add the literary power to the knowledge and the comprehensive vision, we are still short of the secret of the book. Some other writers of history have united these characteristics — Macaulay, for example; for if his "History of England" does not give us a sure grasp of a wide subject, since it intentionally occupies itself with a brief period and with the smallest events, some of the Essays certainly do. But we never should think of classing Green and Macaulay together. Certainly, some of the imposing brilliancy of Macaulay is wanting in Green; but, on the other hand, Macaulay never brings us into so close a personal relation with the age of which we read, and with the writer, as does Green. There is a human interest running through the "Short History" which touches us and kindles the like in us even in the remote and foreign concerns of the Middle Ages. In this particular the words applied by his wife to his writing about the English towns, "ardent sympathy and emotion," fitly describe the whole book. His is a feeling interpretation of history, full of sympathy with the interests of every time, and the ambitions of every true leader. He did not write of a past which seemed to him dead, but of one in which every age was a living action going on before his eyes, in which he was, indeed, while he studied it, himself a living actor, sharing its trials, moved by its hopes and disappointments, and always triumphing in the bit of real progress which fell to it to make. And this feeling of living kinship with the past he awakens in us, in so far as we are capable of it, and with it one of friendly nearness to the writer which is better for him and for us than the highest admiration which brilliancy excites.

So thoroughly human is the book — instead of scholastic, as most men would have made it — that, if we knew nothing else of the writer, we should be led to believe him a man of the

most open mind, of the broadest sympathies, and of the liveliest interest in all sides of current history. And this is the man he was. His friends hastened to put on record at the time of his premature death — in March, 1883, when barely forty-six — such a body of testimony to his lovable nature and his transparent sincerity of mind, as probably no scholar ever before called out. They tell us they were tempted to spend too much time with him, and had to put restraint upon themselves, lest they should selfishly exhaust his strength in his last illness. They speak repeatedly of his conversation, not merely sparkling and vivacious in itself, and running over with enthusiasm, but stimulating others to better things in thought and language than were usual to them; of his always fair and impartial turning over of a question; of his swift reception of new light, his readiness to see the strong points of the opposing opinion, and his unusual skill in bringing all sides of a subject together, all lighted up by his "rich, clear, and picturesque language." These are the qualities of Green the historian, as of Green the man.

And this was true: man and historian alike possessed these qualities, not merely because of natural gifts, which were indeed rich in his case, but also because all the experiences of his life had united to protect and nourish inborn tendencies in these directions. No man could possibly have had a better training for the most important piece of work which he was to do, or one better calculated to enlarge the capacities required for the doing of it. By his birth, as the son of a citizen of Oxford, he belonged to the town population, the burgher class, in whose struggles and achievements he was always deeply interested. When he found himself somewhat isolated in the University by his connection with Jesus College (then chiefly a Welsh college), he turned as by a kind of instinct to local history and antiquities, though these were never to him the dry minutiæ of the ordinary antiquarian, but the survivals of a vigorous and warm life. This interest remained with him always. It was as active in regard to continental towns as to English, and near the end was the source of the suggestion that led to the organization of the Oxford Historical Society. Although he was brought up in extreme high church and tory principles, so that early in life he had a

decided leaning to the Catholic church, he worked himself through by thinking and by experience to be in both church and state the broadest of liberals. The ever watchful "Quarterly Review" speedily detected this tendency in the "Short History," and raised its habitual cry of alarm. In a single article it applied to the poor book all these terms and more: "strange vagaries, violations of common sense, singular perverseness, absurd, confused, incongruous, fantastic, strong prejudices, tirade, the most violent opinions in politics and religion, sympathies not with order but with disorder." Its hysterics are somewhat amusing to us who do not find that any corruption of mind or morals has followed the study of the dreadful book. One of Green's friends speaks of his "warmest interest in and affection for America." By his chosen life-work, that of a parish priest in East London, he was brought into close contact with the laboring classes and with the constantly recurring social problems of every advancing age. Into the effort to solve these, to lift the lowest, morally and intellectually, he threw himself with all his soul, spending his whole income from the parish in the endeavor, and supporting himself by writing over hours. In this passionate energy of work, he laid the foundations of the disease of which he died.

From all this it came that something in his own experience interpreted for him every phase of the nation's past. By birth and love he was of the great middle class, the sound core of England in every age of her history. By his life-work and its field, he was brought into intimate understanding of the lower ranks. In mind and conscious powers he was one of the true aristocracy of genius, by whom in every generation England's aristocracy of blood has been reenforced and kept alive, and from whom the leaders have come in every crisis. He found it easy to understand all, to put himself into sympathy with the peasants of Wat Tyler, and the Puritans of Cromwell, and the oligarchy that ruled in the eighteenth century. He found it easy to live in thought through every struggle, to put himself into the thick of the conflict, and to feel as did the real participants the fluctuations of victory and defeat; and the still more difficult task was not too hard for him, of seeing the merits of both sides

and of doing justice to both parties. In one word, the "Short History" is the work of a scholar who carefully thought out the history of England, but who was also able to live and feel it supremely in his mind.

We have been discussing here the "Short History" from the standpoint of the general reader. It is enough in this place to point out those attributes which have given the book its well-deserved popularity, which have carried it into the hands of all sorts of men, and made it as familiar in American and Colonial homes as in English. These are the characteristics also that are making it for a new generation as fresh as for the author's own. We may reasonably hope that a long mission still awaits it of teaching the whole Anglo-Saxon race not only the history of its past, as the foundation of its present, how were strengthened in us those forces that have given the world into our hands, but also how to make further history of the same kind in our vast domain. What our fathers did, is so told that their courageous liberty in thinking and doing, under a patient respecting of the law, may easily inspire the like traits in us and in our successors; and, with these secure, the historian of some distant age will have the story of a greater past to tell than is recorded in Green's "Short History of the English People."

GEORGE BURTON ADAMS.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE aim of the following work is defined by its title; it is a history, not of English Kings or English Conquests, but of the English People. At the risk of sacrificing much that was interesting and attractive in itself, and which the constant usage of our historians has made familiar to English readers, I have preferred to pass lightly and briefly over the details of foreign wars and diplomacies, the personal adventures of kings and nobles, the pomp of courts, or the intrigues of favorites, and to dwell at length on the incidents of that constitutional, intellectual, and social advance in which we read the history of the nation itself. It is with this purpose that I have devoted more space to Chaucer than to Cressy, to Caxton than to the petty strife of Yorkist and Lancastrian, to the Poor Law of Elizabeth than to her victory at Cadiz, to the Methodist revival than to the escape of the young pretender.

Whatever the worth of the present work may be, I have striven throughout that it should never sink into a "drum and trumpet history." It is the reproach of historians that they have too often turned history into a mere record of the butchery of men by their fellow men. But war plays a small part in the real story of European nations, and in that of England its part is smaller than in any. The only war which has profoundly affected English society and English government is the Hundred Years' war with France, and of that war the results were simply evil. If I have said little of the glories of Cressy, it is because I have dwelt much on the wrong and misery which prompted the verse of Langland and the preaching of Ball. But on the other hand I have never shrunk from telling at length the triumphs of peace. I have

restored to their place among the achievements of Englishmen the "Faerie Queen" and the "Novum Organum." I have set Shakspere among the heroes of the Elizabethan age, and placed the scientific inquiries of the Royal Society side by side with the victories of the New Model. If some of the conventional figures of military and political history occupy in my pages less than the space usually given them, it is because I have had to find a place for figures little heeded in common history — the figures of the missionary, the poet, the printer, the merchant, or the philosopher.

In England, more than elsewhere, constitutional progress has been the result of social development. In a brief summary of our history such as the present, it was impossible to dwell as I could have wished to dwell on every phase of this development; but I have endeavored to point out, at great crises, such as those of the Peasant Revolt or the Rise of the New Monarchy, how much of our political history is the outcome of social changes; and throughout I have drawn greater attention to the religious, intellectual, and industrial progress of the nation itself than has, so far as I remember, ever been done in any previous history of the same extent.

I am only too conscious of the faults and oversights in a work, much of which has been written in hours of weakness and ill health. That its imperfections are not greater than they are, I owe to the kindness of those who have from time to time aided me with suggestions and corrections; and especially to my dear friend Mr. E. A. Freeman, who has never tired of helping me with counsel and criticism. Thanks for like friendly help are due to Professor Stubbs and Professor Bryce, and in literary matters to the Rev. Stopford Brooke, whose wide knowledge and refined taste have been of the greatest service to me.

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A SHORT HISTORY

OF

THE ENGLISH PEOPLE

CHAPTER I

THE ENGLISH KINGDOMS, 607–1013

Section I. — Britain and the English

FOR the fatherland of the English race we must look far away from England itself. In the fifth century after the birth of Christ, the one country which we know to have borne the name of Angeln or the Engleland lay in the district which we now call Sleswick, a district in the heart of the peninsula which parts the Baltic from the northern seas. Its pleasant pastures, its black-timbered homesteads, its prim little townships looking down on inlets of purple water, were then but a wild waste of heather and sand, girt along the coast with sunless woodland, broken here and there by meadows which crept down to the marshes and the sea. The dwellers in this district, however, seem to have been merely an outlying fragment of what was called the Engle or English folk, the bulk of whom lay probably along the middle Elbe and on the Weser. To the north of the English in their Sleswick home lay another kindred tribe, the Jutes, whose name is still preserved in their district of Jutland. To the south of them a number of German tribes had drawn together in their homeland between the Elbe and the Ems, and in a wide tract across the Ems to the Rhine, into the people of the Saxons. Engle, Saxon, and Jute all belonged to the same Low German branch of the Teutonic family; and at the moment when history discovers them, they were being drawn together by the ties of

a common blood, common speech, common social and political institutions. Each of them was destined to share in the conquest of the land in which we live; and it is from the union of all of them when its conquest was complete that the English people has sprung.

Of the temper and life of the folk in this older England we know little. But, from the glimpses which we catch of them when conquest had brought them to the shores of Britain, their political and social organization must have been that of the German race to which they belonged. The basis of their society was the free man. He alone was known as "the man," or "the churl"; and two phrases set his freedom vividly before us. He was "the free-necked man," whose long hair floated over a neck that had never bent to a lord. He was "the weaponed man," who alone bore spear and sword, for he alone possessed the right which in such a state of society formed the main check upon lawless outrage, the right of private war. Among the English, as among all the races of mankind, justice had originally sprung from each man's personal action. There had been a time when every freeman was his own avenger. But even in the earliest forms of English society of which we catch traces this right of self-defense was being modified and restricted by a growing sense of public justice. The "blood-wite," or compensation in money for personal wrong, was the first effort of the tribe as a whole to regulate private revenge. The freeman's life and the freeman's limb had each on this system its legal price. "Eye for eye," ran the rough customary code, and "limb for limb," or for each fair damages. We see a further step towards the recognition of a wrong as done not to the individual man, but to the people at large, in another custom of early date. The price of life or limb was paid, not by the wrong-doer to the man he wronged, but by the family or house of the wrong-doer to the family or house of the wronged. Order and law were thus made to rest in each little group of English people upon the blood-bond which knit its families together; every outrage was held to have been done by all who were linked by blood to the doer of it, every crime to have been done against all who were linked by blood to the sufferer from it. From this sense of the value of the family

bond, as a means of restraining the wrong-doer by forces which the tribe as a whole did not as yet possess, sprang the first rude forms of English justice. Each kinsman was his kinsman's keeper, bound to protect him from wrong, to hinder him from wrong-doing, and to suffer with and pay for him, if wrong were done. So fully was this principle recognized that, even if any man was charged before his fellow tribesmen with crime, his kinsfolk still remained in fact his sole judges; for it was by their solemn oath of his innocence or his guilt that he had to stand or fall.

The blood-bond gave both its military and social form to Old English society. Kinsmen fought side by side in the hour of battle, and the feelings of honor and discipline which held the host together were drawn from the common duty of every man in each little group of warriors to his house. And as they fought side by side on the field, so they dwelt side by side on the soil. Harling abode by Harling, and Billing by Billing; and each "wick" or "ham" or "stead" or "tun" took its name from the kinsmen who dwelt together in it. The home or "ham" of the Billings would be Billingham, and the "tun" or township of the Harlings would be Harlington. But in such settlements the tie of blood was widened into the larger tie of land. Land with the German race seems at a very early time to have become the accompaniment of full freedom. The freeman was strictly the freeholder, and the exercise of his full rights as a free member of the community to which he belonged was inseparable from the possession of his "holding." The landless man ceased for all practical purposes to be free, though he was no man's slave. In the very earliest glimpse we get of the German race we see them a race of landholders and land-tillers. Tacitus, the first Roman who sought to know these destined conquerors of Rome, describes them as pasturing on the forest glades around their villages, and plowing their village fields. A feature which at once struck him as parting them from the civilized world to which he himself belonged was their hatred of cities, and their love even within their little settlements of a jealous independence. "They live apart," he says, "each by himself, as woodside, plain, or fresh spring attracts him." And as each dweller within the settlement was jealous of his own isolation and independence among

his fellow settlers, so each settlement was jealous of its independence among its fellow settlements. Of the character of their life in this early world, however, we know little save what may be gathered from the indications of a later time. Each little farmer commonwealth was girt in by its own border or "mark," a belt of forest or waste or fen which parted it from its fellow villages, a ring of common ground which none of its settlers might take for his own, but which sometimes served as a death-ground where criminals met their doom, and was held to be the special dwelling-place of the nixie and the will-o'-the-wisp. If a stranger came through this wood, or over this waste, custom bade him blow his horn as he came, for if he stole through secretly he was taken for a foe, and any man might lawfully slay him. Inside this boundary the "township," as the village was then called from the "tun" or rough fence and trench that served as its simple fortification, formed a ready-made fortress in war, while in peace its entrenchments were serviceable in the feuds of village with village, or house with house. Within the village we find from the first a marked social difference between two orders of its indwellers. The bulk of its homesteads were those of its freemen or "ceorls"; but amongst these were the larger homes of "eorls," or men distinguished among their fellows by noble blood, who were held in an hereditary reverence, and from whom the leaders of the village were chosen in war time, or rulers in time of peace. But the choice was a purely voluntary one, and the man of noble blood enjoyed no legal privilege among his fellows. The holdings of the freemen clustered round a moot-hill or sacred tree where the community met from time to time to order its own industry and to frame its own laws. Here plowland and meadow-land were shared in due lot among the villagers, and field and homestead passed from man to man. Here strife of farmer with farmer was settled according to the "customs" of the township as its "elder men" stated them, and the wrong-doer was judged and his fine assessed by the kinsfolk; and here men were chosen to follow headman or ealdorman to hundred court or war. It is with a reverence such as is stirred by the sight of the head waters of some mighty river that one looks back to these tiny moots, where the men of the village met to order the village

life and the village industry, as their descendants, the men of a later England, meet in Parliament at Westminster, to frame laws and do justice for the great empire which has sprung from this little body of farmer commonwealths in Sleswick.

The religion of the English was the same as that of the whole German family. Christianity, which had by this time brought about the conversion of the Roman empire, had not penetrated as yet among the forests of the North. Our own names for the days of the week still recall to us the gods whom our fathers worshiped. Wednesday is the day of Woden, the war-god, the guardian of ways and boundaries, the inventor of letters, the common god of the whole conquering people, whom every tribe held to be the first ancestor of its kings. Thursday is the day of Thunder, or, as the Northmen called him, Thor, the god of air and storm and rain; as Friday is Frea's-day, the god of peace and joy and fruitfulness, whose emblems, borne aloft by dancing maidens, brought increase to every field and stall they visited. Saturday may commemorate an obscure god Sætere; Tuesday the dark god, Tiw, to meet whom was death. Behind these floated dim shapes of an older mythology; Eostre, the goddess of the dawn, or of the spring, who lends her name to the Christian festival of the Resurrection; "Wyrd," the death-goddess, whose memory lingered long in the "weird" of northern superstition; or the Shield-Maidens, the "mighty women" who, an old rime tells us, "wrought on the battle-field their toil, and hurled the thrilling javelins." Nearer to the popular fancy lay deities of wood and fell, or the hero-gods of legend and song; "Nicor," the water-sprite, who gave us our water-nixies and "Old Nick"; "Weland," the forger of mighty shields and sharp-biting swords, whose memory lingers in the stories of Weyland's "Smithy" in Berkshire; while the name of Ailesbury may preserve the last trace of the legend of Weland's brother, the sun-archer Ægil. But it is only in broken fragments that this mass of early faith and early poetry still lives for us, in a name, in the gray stones of a cairn, or in snatches of our older song: and the faint traces of worship or of priesthood which we find in later history show how lightly it clung to the national life.

From Sleswick and the shores of the northern sea we

must pass, before opening our story, to a land which, dear as it is now to Englishmen, had not as yet been trodden by English feet. The island of Britain had for nearly four hundred years been a province of the empire. A descent of Julius Cæsar revealed it (55 B.C.) to the Roman world, but nearly a century elapsed before the Emperor Claudius attempted its definite conquest. The victories of Julius Agricola (78–84 A.D.) carried the Roman frontier to the Firths of Forth and of Clyde, and the work of Roman civilization followed hard upon the Roman sword. Population was grouped in cities such as York or Lincoln, cities governed by their own municipal officers, guarded by massive walls, and linked together by a network of roads which extended from one end of the island to the other. Commerce sprang up in ports like that of London; agriculture flourished till Britain was able at need to supply the necessities of Gaul; its mineral resources were explored in the tin mines of Cornwall, the lead mines of Somerset and Northumberland, and the iron mines of the Forest of Dean. The wealth of the island grew fast during centuries of unbroken peace, but the evils which were slowly sapping the strength of the Roman empire at large must have told heavily on the real wealth of the province of Britain. Here, as in Italy or Gaul, the population probably declined as the estates of the landed proprietors grew larger, and the cultivators sank into serfs whose cabins clustered round the luxurious villas of their lords. The mines, if worked by forced labor, must have been a source of endless oppression. Town and country were alike crushed by heavy taxation, while industry was fettered by laws that turned every trade into an hereditary caste. Above all, the purely despotic system of the Roman government, by crushing all local independence, crushed all local vigor. Men forgot how to fight for their country when they forgot how to govern it.

Such causes of decay were common to every province of the empire; but there were others that sprang from the peculiar circumstances of Britain itself. The island was weakened by a disunion within, which arose from the partial character of its civilization. It was only in the towns that the conquered Britons became entirely Romanized. Over

large tracts of country the rural Britons seemed to have remained apart, speaking their own tongue, owning some traditional allegiance to their native chiefs, and even retaining their native laws. The use of the Roman language may be taken as marking the progress of Roman civilization, and though Latin had wholly superseded the language of the conquered peoples in Spain or Gaul, its use seems to have been confined in Britain to the townsfolk and the wealthier landowners without the towns. The dangers that sprang from such a severance between the two elements of the population must have been stirred into active life by the danger which threatened Britain from the north. The Picts who had been sheltered from Roman conquest by the fastnesses of the Highlands were roused in their turn to attack by the weakness of the province and the hope of plunder. Their invasions penetrated to the heart of the island. Raids so extensive could hardly have been effected without help from within, and the dim history of the time allows us to see not merely an increase of disunion between the Romanized and un-Romanized population of Britain, but even an alliance between the last and their free kinsfolk, the Picts. The struggles of Britain, however, lingered on till dangers nearer home forced the empire to recall its legions and leave the province to itself. Ever since the birth of Christ the countries which lay round the Mediterranean Sea, and which then comprehended the whole of the civilized world, had rested in peace beneath the rule of Rome. During four hundred years its frontier had held at bay the barbarian world without — the Parthian of the Euphrates, the Numidian of the African desert, the German of the Danube or the Rhine. It was this mass of savage barbarism that at last broke in on the empire as it sank into decay. In the western dominions of Rome the triumph of the invaders was complete. The Franks conquered and colonized Gaul. The West-Goths conquered and colonized Spain. The Vandals founded a kingdom in Africa. The Burgundians encamped in the border-land between Italy and the Rhone. The East-Goths ruled at last in Italy itself. And now that the fated hour was come, the Saxon and the Engle too closed upon their prey.

It was to defend Italy against the Goths that Rome in 410

recalled her legions from Britain. The province, thus left unaided, seems to have fought bravely against its assailants, and once at least to have driven back the Picts to their mountains in a rising of despair. But the threat of fresh inroads found Britain torn with civil quarrels which made a united resistance impossible, while its Pictish enemies strengthened themselves by a league with marauders from Ireland (Scots as they were then called), whose pirate boats were harrying the western coast of the island, and with a yet more formidable race of pirates who had long been pillaging along the British Channel. These were the English. We do not know whether it was the pressure of other tribes or the example of their German brethren, who were now moving in a general attack on the empire from their forest homes, or simply the barrenness of their coast, which drove the hunters, farmers, fishermen, of the English tribes to sea. But the daring spirit of their race already broke out in the secresy and suddenness of their swoop, in the fierceness of their onset, in the careless glee with which they seized either sword or oar. "Foes are they," sang a Roman poet of the time, "fierce beyond other foes, and cunning as they are fierce; the sea is their school of war, and the storm their friend; they are sea-wolves that live on the pillage of the world." To meet the league of Pict, Scot, and Saxon by the forces of the province itself became impossible; and the one course left was to imitate the fatal policy by which the empire had invited its own doom while striving to avert it, the policy of matching barbarian against barbarian. The rulers of Britain resolved to break the league by detaching from it the freebooters who were harrying her eastern coast, and to use their new allies against the Pict. By the usual promises of land and pay, a band of warriors from Jutland were drawn for this purpose in 449 to the shores of Britain, with their chiefs, Hengest and Horsa, at their head.

Section II. — The English Conquest. 449–577

It is with the landing of Hengest and his war band at Ebbsfleet on the shores of the Isle of Thanet that English history begins. No spot in Britain can be so sacred to Englishmen

as that which first felt the tread of English feet. There is little indeed to catch the eye in Ebbsfleet itself, a mere lift of higher ground, with a few gray cottages dotted over it, cut off nowadays from the sea by a reclaimed meadow and a sea-wall. But taken as a whole the scene has a wild beauty of its own. To the right the white curve of Ramsgate cliffs looks down on the crescent of Pegwell Bay; far away to the left, across gray marsh levels, where smoke wreaths mark the sites of Richborough and Sandwich, the coast line bends dimly to the fresh rise of cliffs beyond Deal. Everything in the character of the ground confirms the national tradition which fixed here the first landing-place of our English fathers, for great as the physical changes of the country have been since the fifth century, they have told little on its main features. It is easy to discover in the misty level of the present Minster marsh what was once a broad inlet of sea parting Thanet from the mainland of Britain, through which the pirate boats of the first Englishmen came sailing with a fair wind to the little gravel-spit of Ebbsfleet; and Richborough, a fortress whose broken ramparts still rise above the gray flats which have taken the place of this older sea channel, was the common landing-place of travelers from Gaul. If the war-ships of the pirates therefore were cruising off the coast at the moment when the bargain with the Britons was concluded, their disembarkation at Ebbsfleet almost beneath the walls of Richborough would be natural enough. But the after current of events serves to show that the choice of this landing-place was the result of a settled design. Between the Briton and his hireling soldiers there could be little trust. Quarters in Thanet would satisfy the followers of Hengest, who still lay in sight of their fellow pirates in the Channel, and who felt themselves secured against the treachery which had so often proved fatal to the barbarian by the broad inlet which parted their camp from the mainland. Nor was the choice less satisfactory to the provincial, trembling — and, as the event proved, justly trembling — lest in his zeal against the Pict he had introduced an even fiercer foe into Britain. His dangerous allies were cooped up in a corner of the land, and parted from it by a sea channel which was guarded by the strongest fortresses of the coast.

The need of such precautions was seen in the disputes which arose as soon as the work for which the mercenaries had been hired was done. The Picts were hardly scattered to the winds in a great battle when danger came from the Jutes themselves. Their numbers probably grew fast as the news of the settlement spread among the pirates in the Channel, and with the increase of their number must have grown the difficulty of supplying rations and pay. The dispute which rose over these questions was at last closed by Hengest's men with a threat of war. The threat, however, as we have seen, was no easy one to carry out. Right across their path in any attack upon Britain stretched the inlet of sea that parted Thanet from the mainland, a strait which was then traversable only at low water by a long and dangerous ford, and guarded at either mouth by the fortresses of Richborough and Reculver. The channel of the Medway, with the forest of the Weald bending round it from the south, furnished another line of defense in the rear, while strongholds on the sites of our Canterbury and Rochester guarded the road to London; and all around lay the soldiers placed at the command of the count of the Saxon shore, to hold the coast against the barbarian. Great however as these difficulties were, they failed to check the sudden onset of the Jutes. The inlet seems to have been crossed, the coast road to London seized, before any force could be collected to oppose the English advance; and it was only when they passed the Swale and looked to their right over the potteries whose refuse still strews the mudbanks of Upchurch, that their march seems to have swerved abruptly to the south. The guarded walls of Rochester probably forced them to turn southwards along the ridge of low hills which forms the eastern boundary of the Medway valley. Their way led them through a district full of memories of a past which had even then faded from the minds of men; for the hill slopes which they traversed were the grave ground of a vanished race, and scattered among the boulders that strewed the ground rose the cromlechs and huge barrows of the dead. One mighty relic survives in the monument now called Kit's Coty House, which had been linked in old days by an avenue of huge stones to a burial-ground near Ad lington. It was from a steep knoll

on which the gray weather-beaten stones of this monument are reared that the view of their first battle-field would break on the English warriors; and a lane which still leads down from it through peaceful homesteads would guide them across the ford which has left its name in the little village of Aylesford. The "Chronicle" of the conquering people tells nothing of the rush that may have carried the ford, or of the fight that went struggling up through the village. It only tells that Horsa fell in the moment of victory; and the flint heap of Horsted, which has long preserved his name and was held in after-time to mark his grave, is thus the earliest of those monuments of English valor of which Westminster is the last and noblest shrine.

The victory of Aylesford did more than give East Kent to the English; it struck the keynote of the whole English conquest of Britain. The massacre which followed the battle indicated at once the merciless nature of the struggle which had begun. While the wealthier Kentish landowners fled in panic over-sea, the poorer Britons took refuge in hill and forest till hunger drove them from their lurking-places to be cut down or enslaved by their conquerors. It was in vain that some sought shelter within the walls of their churches; for the rage of the English seems to have burned fiercest against the clergy. The priests were slain at the altar, the churches fired, the peasants driven by the flames to fling themselves on a ring of pitiless steel. It is a picture such as this which distinguishes the conquest of Britain from that of the other provinces of Rome. The conquest of Gaul by the Frank, or of Italy by the Lombard, proved little more than a forcible settlement of the one or the other among tributary subjects who were destined in a long course of ages to absorb their conquerors. French is the tongue, not of the Frank, but of the Gaul whom he overcame; and the fair hair of the Lombard is now all but unknown in Lombardy. But the English conquest for a hundred and fifty years was a sheer dispossession and driving back of the people whom the English conquered. In the world-wide struggle between Rome and the German invaders no land was so stubbornly fought for or so hardly won. The conquest of Britain was indeed only partly wrought out after two centuries of bitter warfare.

But it was just through the long and merciless nature of the struggle that of all the German conquests this proved the most thorough and complete. So far as the English sword in these earlier days reached, Britain became England, a land, that is, not of Britons, but of Englishmen. It is possible that a few of the vanquished people may have lingered as slaves round the homesteads of their English conquerors, and a few of their household words (if these were not brought in at a later time) mingled oddly with the English tongue. But doubtful exceptions such as these leave the main facts untouched. When the steady progress of English conquest was stayed for a while by civil wars a century and a half after Aylesford, the Briton had disappeared from half of the land which had been his own, and the tongue, the religion, the laws of his English conqueror, reigned without a rival from Essex to the Peak of Derbyshire and the mouth of the Severn, and from the British Channel to the Firth of Forth.

Aylesford, however, was but the first step in this career of conquest. How stubborn the contest was may be seen from the fact that it took sixty years to complete the conquest of Southern Britain alone. It was twenty years before Kent itself was won. After a second defeat at the passage of the Cray, the Britons "forsook Kent-land and fled with much fear to London"; but the ground was soon won back again, and it was not until 465 that a series of petty conflicts made way for a decisive struggle at Wippedsfleet. Here however the overthrow was so terrible that all hope of saving the bulk of Kent seems to have been abandoned, and it was only on its southern shore that the Britons held their ground. Eight years later the long contest was over, and with the fall of Lymne, whose broken walls look from the slope to which they cling over the great flat of Romney Marsh, the work of the first conqueror was done. But the greed of plunder drew fresh war bands from the German coast. New invaders, drawn from among the Saxon tribes that lay between the Elbe and the Rhine, were seen in 477, only four years later, pushing slowly along the strip of land which lay westward of Kent between the Weald and the sea. Nowhere has the physical aspect of the country been more utterly changed.

The vast sheet of scrub, woodland, and waste which then bore the name of the Andredsweald stretched for more than a hundred miles from the borders of Kent to the Hampshire Downs, extending northward almost to the Thames, and leaving only a thin strip of coast along its southern edge. This coast was guarded by a great fortress which occupied the spot now called Pevensey, the future landing-place of the Norman Conqueror. The fall of this fortress of Anderida in 491 established the kingdom of the South-Saxons; "Ælle and Cissa," ran the pitiless record of the conquerors, "beset Anderida, and slew all that were therein, nor was there afterwards one Briton left." Another tribe of Saxons was at the same time conquering on the other side of Kent, to the north of the estuary of the Thames, and had founded the settlement of the East-Saxons, as these warriors came to be called, in the valleys of the Colne and the Stour. To the northward of the Stour, the work of conquest was taken up by the third of the tribes whom we have seen dwelling in their German home land, whose name was destined to absorb that of Saxon or Jute, and to stamp itself on the land they won. These were the Engle, or Englishmen. Their first descents seem to have fallen on the great district which was cut off from the rest of Britain by the Wash and the Fens and long reaches of forest, the latter East Anglia, where the conquerors settled as the North-folk and the South-folk, names still preserved to us in the modern counties. With this settlement the first stage in the conquest was complete. By the close of the fifth century the whole coast of Britain, from the Wash to Southampton Water, was in the hands of the invaders. As yet, however, the enemy had touched little more than the coast; great masses of woodland or of fen still prisoned the Engle, the Saxon, and the Jute alike within narrow limits. But the sixth century can hardly have been long begun when each of the two peoples who had done the main work of conquest opened a fresh attack on the flanks of the tract they had won. On its northern flank the Engle appeared in the estuaries of the Forth and of the Humber. On its western flank the Saxons appeared in the Southampton Water.

The true conquest of Southern Britain was reserved for a

fresh band of Saxons, a tribe whose older name was that of the Gewissas, but who were to be more widely known as the West-Saxons. Landing westward of the strip of coast which had been won by the war bands of Ælle, they struggled under Cerdic and Cynric up from Southampton Water in 495 to the great downs where Winchester offered so rich a prize. Five thousand Britons fell in a fight which opened the country to these invaders, and a fresh victory at Charford in 519 set the crown of the West-Saxons on the head of Cerdic. We know little of the incidents of these conquests; nor do we know why at this juncture they seem to have been suddenly interrupted. But it is certain that a victory of the Britons at Mount Badon in the year 520 checked the progress of the West-Saxons, and was followed by a long pause in their advance; for thirty years the great belt of woodland which then curved round from Dorset to the valley of the Thames seems to have barred the way of the assailants. What finally broke their inaction we cannot tell. We only know that Cynric, whom Cerdic's death left king of the West-Saxons, again took up the work of invasion by a new advance in 552. The capture of the hill fort of Old Sarum threw open the reaches of the Wiltshire Downs; and pushing northward to a new battle at Barbury Hill, they completed the conquest of the Marlborough Downs. From the bare uplands the invaders turned eastward to the richer valleys of our Berkshire, and after a battle with the Kentish men at Wimbledon, the land south of the Thames which now forms our Surrey was added to their dominions. The road along the Thames was however barred to them, for the district around London seems to have been already won and colonized by the East-Saxons. But a march of their King Cuthwulf made them masters in 571 of the districts which now form Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire; and a few years later they swooped from the Wiltshire uplands on the rich prey that lay along the Severn. Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath, cities which had leagued under their British kings to resist this onset, became the spoil of a Saxon victory at Deorham in 577, and the line of the great western river lay open to the arms of the conquerors. Under a new king, Ceawlin, the West-Saxons penetrated to the borders of Chester, and Uriconium, a town

beside the Wrekin, recently again brought to light, went up in flames. A British poet sings piteously the death song of Uriconium, "the white town in the valley," the town of white stone gleaming among the green woodland, the hall of its chieftain left "without fire, without light, without songs," the silence broken only by the eagle's scream, "the eagle who has swallowed fresh drink, heart's blood of Kyndylan the fair." The raid, however, was repulsed, and the blow proved fatal to the power of Wessex. Though the West-Saxons were destined in the end to win the overlordship over every English people, their time had not come yet, and the leadership of the English race was to fall, for nearly a century to come, to the tribe of invaders whose fortunes we have now to follow.

Rivers were the natural inlets by which the northern pirates everywhere made their way into the heart of Europe. In Britain the fortress of London barred their way along the Thames from its mouth, and drove them, as we have seen, to an advance along the southern coast and over the downs of Wiltshire, before reaching its upper waters. But the rivers which united in the estuary of the Humber led like open highways into the heart of Britain, and it was by this inlet that the great mass of the invaders penetrated into the interior of the island. Like the invaders of East Anglia, they were of the English tribe from Sleswick. As the storm fell in the opening of the sixth century on the wolds of Lincolnshire that stretch southward from the Humber, the conquerors who settled in the deserted country were known as the "Lindiswara," or "dwellers about Lindum." A part of the warriors who had entered the Humber, turned southward by the forest of Elmet which covered the district around Leeds, followed the course of the Trent. Those who occupied the wooded country between the Trent and the Humber took from their position the name of Southumbrians. A second division, advancing along the curve of the former river and creeping down the line of its tributary, the Soar, till they reached Leicester, became known as the Middle-English. The marshes of the Fen country were settled by tribes known as the Gyrwas. The head waters of the Trent were the seat of those invaders who penetrated furthest to the west and

camped round Lichfield and Repton. This country became the border-land between Englishmen and Britons, and the settlers bore the name of "Mercians," men, that is, of the March or border. We know hardly anything of this conquest of Mid-Britain, and little more of the conquest of the North. Under the Romans, political power had centered in the vast district between the Humber and the Forth. York had been the capital of Britain and the seat of the Roman prefect; and the bulk of the garrison maintained in the island lay cantoned along the Roman wall. Signs of wealth and prosperity appeared everywhere; cities rose beneath the shelter of the Roman camps; villas of British landowners studded the vale of the Ouse and the far-off uplands of the Tweed, where the shepherd trusted for security against Pictish marauders to the terror of the Roman name. This district was assailed at once from the north and from the south. A part of the invading force which entered the Humber marched over the Yorkshire wolds to found a kingdom, which was known as that of the Deiri, in the fens of Holderness and on the chalk downs eastward of York. But they were soon drawn onwards, and after a struggle of which we know nothing, York, like its neighbor cities, lay a desolate ruin, while the conquerors spread northward, slaying and burning along the valley of the Ouse. Meanwhile the pirates had appeared in the Forth, and won their way along the Tweed; Ida and the men of fifty keels which followed him reared the capital of the northernmost kingdom of the English, that of Bernicia, on the rock of Bamborough, and won their way slowly along the coast against a stubborn resistance which formed the theme of British songs. The strife between the kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia for supremacy in the north was closed by their being united under King Æthelric of Bernicia; and from this union was formed a new kingdom, the kingdom of Northumbria.

It was this century of conquest by the English race which really made Britain England. In our anxiety to know more of our fathers, we listen to the monotonous plaint of Gildas, the one writer whom Britain has left us, with a strange disappointment. Gildas had seen the invasion of the pirate hosts, and it is to him we owe our knowledge of the conquest

of Kent. But we look in vain to his book for any account of the life or settlement of the English conquerors. Across the border of the new England that was growing up along the southern shores of Britain, Gildas gives us but a glimpse — doubtless he had but a glimpse himself — of forsaken walls, of shrines polluted by heathen impiety. His silence and his ignorance mark the character of the struggle. No British neck had as yet bowed before the English invader, no British pen was to record his conquest. A century after their landing the English are still known to their British foes only as "barbarians," "wolves," "dogs," "whelps from the kennel of barbarism," "hateful to God and man." Their victories seemed victories of the powers of evil, chastisements of a divine justice for national sin. Their ravage, terrible as it had been, was held to be almost at an end: in another century — so ran old prophecies — their last hold on the land would be shaken off. But of submission to, or even intercourse with, the strangers there is not a word. Gildas tells us nothing of their fortunes or of their leaders.

In spite of his silence, however, we may still know something of the way in which the new English society grew up in the conquered country, for the driving back of the Briton was but the prelude to the settlement of his conqueror. What strikes us at once in the new England is that it was the one purely German nation that rose upon the wreck of Rome. In other lands, in Spain, or Gaul, or Italy, though they were equally conquered by German peoples, religion, social life, administrative order, still remained Roman. In Britain alone Rome died into a vague tradition of the past. The whole organization of government and society disappeared with the people who used it. The villas, the mosaics, the coins which we dig up in our fields, are no relics of our English fathers, but of a Roman world which our fathers' sword swept utterly away. Its law, its literature, its manners, its faith, went with it. The new England was a heathen country. The religion of Woden and Thunder triumphed over the religion of Christ. Alone among the German assailants of Rome the English rejected the faith of the empire they helped to overthrow. Elsewhere the Christian priesthood served as mediators between the barbarian and

the conquered, but in the conquered part of Britain Christianity wholly disappeared. River and homestead and boundary, the very days of the week, bore the names of the new gods who displaced Christ. But if England seemed for the moment a waste from which all the civilization of the world had fled away, it contained within itself the germs of a nobler life than that which had been destroyed. The base of the new English society was the freeman whom we have seen tilling, judging, or sacrificing for himself in his far-off fatherland by the northern sea. However roughly he dealt while the struggle went on with the material civilization of Britain, it was impossible that such a man could be a mere destroyer. War was no sooner over than the warrior settled down into a farmer, and the home of the peasant churl rose beside the heap of goblin-haunted stones that marked the site of the villa he had burnt. Little knots of kinsfolk drew together in "tun" and "ham" beside the Thames and the Trent as they had settled beside the Elbe or the Weser, not as kinsfolk only, but as dwellers in the same plot, knit together by their common holding within the same bounds. Each little village commonwealth lived the same life in Britain as its farmers had lived at home. Each had its moot-hill or sacred tree as a center, its "mark" as a border; each judged by witness of the kinsfolk and made laws in the assembly of its freemen, and chose the leaders for its own governance, and the men who were to follow headman or ealdorman to hundred-court or war.

In more ways than one, indeed, the primitive organization of English society was affected by its transfer to the soil of Britain. Conquest begat the king. It is probable that the English had hitherto known nothing of kings in their own fatherland, where each tribe lived under the rule of its own customary ealdorman. But in a war such as that which they waged against the Britons it was necessary to find a common leader whom the various tribes engaged in conquests such as those of Kent or Wessex might follow; and such a leader soon rose into a higher position than that of a temporary chief. The sons of Hengest became kings in Kent; those of Ælle in Sussex; the West-Saxons chose Cerdic for their king. Such a choice at once drew the various villages and

tribes of each community closer together than of old, while the new ruler surrounded himself with a chosen war band of companions, servants, or "thegns" as they were called, who were rewarded for their service by gifts from the public land. Their distinction rested, not on hereditary rank, but on service done to the king, and they at last became a nobility which superseded the "eorls" of the original English constitution. And as war begat the king and the military noble, so it all but begat the slave. There had always been a slave class, a class of the unfree, among the English as among all German peoples; but the numbers of this class, if unaffected by the conquest of Britain, were swelled by the wars which soon sprang up among the English conquerors. No rank saved the prisoner taken in battle from the doom of slavery, and slavery itself was often welcomed as saving the prisoner from death. We see this in the story of a noble warrior who had fallen wounded in a fight between two English tribes, and was carried as a bond slave to the house of a thegn hard by. He declared himself a peasant, but his master penetrated the disguise. "You deserve death," he said, "since all my brothers and kinsfolk fell in the fight"; but for his oath's sake he spared his life and sold him to a Frisian at London, probably a merchant such as those who were carrying English captives at that time to the market-place of Rome. But war was not the only cause of the increase of this slave class. The numbers of the "unfree" were swelled by death and crime. Famine drove men to "bend their heads in the evil days for meat"; the debtor unable to discharge his debt flung on the ground the freeman's sword and spear, took up the laborer's mattock, and placed his head as a slave within a master's hands. The criminal whose kinsfolk would not make up his fine became a crime serf of the plaintiff or the king. Sometimes a father, pressed by need, sold children and wife into bondage. The slave became part of the live stock of the estate, to be willed away at death with horse or ox whose pedigree was kept as carefully as his own. His children were bondsmen like himself; even the freeman's children by a slave mother inherited the mother's taint. "Mine is the calf that is born of my cow," ran the English proverb. The cabins of the unfree clustered

round the home of the rich landowner as they had clustered round the villa of the Roman gentleman; plowman, shepherd, goatherd, swineherd, oxherd, and cowherd, dairymaid, barnman, sower, hayward, and woodward, were often slaves. It was not such a slavery as that we have known in modern times, for stripes and bonds were rare; if the slave were slain, it was by an angry blow, not by the lash. But his lord could slay him if he would; it was but a chattel the less. The slave had no place in the justice court, no kinsman to claim vengeance for his wrong. If a stranger slew him, his lord claimed the damages; if guilty of wrong-doing, "his skin paid for him" under the lash. If he fled he might be chased like a strayed beast, and flogged to death for his crime, or burned to death if the slave were a woman.

Section III. — The Northumbrian Kingdom, 588–685

The conquest of the bulk of Britain was now complete. Eastward of a line which may be roughly drawn along the moorlands of Northumberland and Yorkshire, through Derbyshire and skirting the forest of Arden, to the mouth of the Severn, and thence by Mendip to the sea, the island had passed into English hands. From this time the character of the English conquest of Britain was wholly changed. The older wars of extermination came to an end, and as the invasion pushed westward in later times the Britons were no longer wholly driven from the soil, but mingled with their conquerors. A far more important change was that which was seen in the attitude of the English conquerors from this time towards each other. Freed to a great extent from the common pressure of the war against the Britons, their energies turned to combats with one another, to a long struggle for overlordship which was to end in bringing about a real national unity. The West-Saxons, beaten back from their advance along the Severn valley and overthrown in a terrible defeat at Faddiley, were torn by internal dissensions, even while they were battling for life against the Britons. Strife between the two rival kingdoms of Bernicia and Deira in the north absorbed the power of the Engle in that quarter, till in 588 the strength of Deira suddenly broke down, and the

Bernician king, Æthelric, gathered the two peoples into a realm which was to form the later kingdom of Northumbria. Amid the confusion of north and south, the primacy among the conquerors was seized by Kent, where the kingdom of the Jutes rose suddenly into greatness under a king called Æthelberht, who before 597 established his supremacy over the Saxons of Middlesex and Essex, as well as over the Englishes of East Anglia and of Mercia as far north as the Humber and the Trent.

The overlordship of Æthelberht was marked by a renewal of that intercourse of Britain with the Continent which had been broken off by the conquests of the English. His marriage with Bertha, the daughter of the Frankish King Charibert of Paris, created a fresh tie between Kent and Gaul. But the union had far more important results than those of which Æthelberht may have dreamed. Bertha, like her Frankish kinsfolk, was a Christian. A Christian bishop accompanied her from Gaul to Canterbury, the royal city of the kingdom of Kent; and a ruined Christian church, the church of St. Martin, was given them for their worship. The marriage of Bertha was an opportunity which was at once seized by the bishop who at this time occupied the Roman see, and who is justly known as Gregory the Great. A memorable story tells us how, when but a young Roman deacon, Gregory had noted the white bodies, the fair faces, the golden hair, of some youths who stood bound in the market-place of Rome. "From what country do these slaves come?" he asked the traders who brought them. "They are English, Angles!" the slave-dealers answered. The deacon's pity veiled itself in poetic humor. "Not Angles but Angels," he said, "with faces so angel-like! From what country come they?" "They come," said the merchants, "from Deira." "De ira!" was the untranslatable reply; "aye, plucked from God's ire, and called to Christ's mercy! And what is the name of their king?" "Ælla," they told him; and Gregory seized on the words as of good omen. "Alleluia shall be sung in Ælla's land!" he cried, and passed on, musing how the angel-faces should be brought to sing it. Only three or four years had gone by, when the deacon had become bishop of Rome, and Bertha's marriage gave him the opening he sought. After

cautious negotiations with the rulers of Gaul, he sent a Roman abbot, Augustine, at the head of a band of monks, to preach the gospel to the English people. The missionaries landed in 597 on the very spot where Hengest had landed more than a century before in the Isle of Thanet; and the king received them sitting in the open air on the chalk down above Minster, where the eye nowadays catches miles away over the marshes the dim tower of Canterbury. He listened to the long sermon as the interpreters whom Augustine had brought with him from Gaul translated it. "Your words are fair," Æthelberht replied at last with English good sense, "but they are new and of doubtful meaning"; for himself, he said, he refused to forsake the gods of his fathers, but he promised shelter and protection to the strangers. The band of monks entered Canterbury bearing before them a silver cross with a picture of Christ, and singing in concert the strains of the litany of their Church. "Turn from this city, Lord," they sang, "Thine anger and wrath, and turn it from Thy holy house, for we have sinned." And then in strange contrast came the jubilant cry of the older Hebrew worship, the cry which Gregory had wrested in prophetic earnestness from the name of the Yorkshire king in the Roman market-place, "Alleluia!"

It is strange that the spot which witnessed the landing of Hengest should be yet better known as the landing-place of Augustine. But the second landing at Ebbsfleet was in no small measure the reversal and undoing of the first. "Strangers from Rome" was the title with which the missionaries first fronted the English king. The march of the monks as they chanted their solemn litany was, in one sense, the return of the Roman legions who had retired at the trumpet-call of Alaric. It was to the tongue and the thought not of Gregory only but of such men as his own Jutish fathers had slaughtered and driven over sea that Æthelberht listened in the preaching of Augustine. Canterbury, the earliest royal city of the new England, became the center of Latin influence. The Roman tongue became again one of the tongues of Britain, the language of its worship, its correspondence, its literature. But more than the tongue of Rome returned with Augustine. Practically his landing renewed

the union with the western world which the landing of Hengest had all but destroyed. The new England was admitted into the older commonwealth of nations. The civilization, arts, letters, which had fled before the sword of the English conquest, returned with the Christian faith. The fabric of the Roman law indeed never took root in England, but it is impossible not to recognize the result of the influence of the Roman missionaries in the fact that the codes of customary English law began to be put into writing soon after their arrival.

As yet these great results were still distant; a year passed before Æthelberht yielded, and though after his conversion thousands of the Kentish men crowded to baptism, it was years before he ventured to urge the under-kings of Essex and East Anglia to receive the creed of their overlord. This effort of Æthelberht however only heralded a revolution which broke the power of Kent forever. The tribes of Mid-Britain revolted against his supremacy, and gathered under the overlordship of Rædwald of East Anglia. The revolution clearly marked the change which had passed over Britain. Instead of a chaos of isolated peoples, the conquerors were now in fact gathered into three great groups. The Engle kingdom of the north reached from the Humber to the Forth. The southern kingdom of the West-Saxons stretched from Watling Street to the Channel. And between these was roughly sketched out the great kingdom of Mid-Britain, which, however its limits might vary, retained a substantial identity from the time of Æthelberht till the final fall of the Mercian kings. For the next two hundred years the history of England lies in the struggle of Northumbrian, Mercian, and West-Saxon kings to establish their supremacy over the general mass of Englishmen, and unite them in a single England.

In this struggle the lead was at once taken by Northumbria, which was rising into a power that set all rivalry at defiance. Under Æthelfrith, who had followed Æthelric in 593, the work of conquest went on rapidly. In 603 the forces of the northern Britons were annihilated in a great battle at Dægsastan, and the rule of Northumbria was established from the Humber to the Forth. Along the west of Britain there stretched the unconquered kingdoms of Strathclyde and Cum-

bria, which extended from the river Clyde to the Dee, and the smaller British states which occupied what we now call Wales. Chester formed the link between these two bodies; and it was Chester that Æthelfrith chose in 613 for his next point of attack. Some miles from the city two thousand monks were gathered in the monastery of Bangor, and after imploring in a three days' fast the help of Heaven for their country, a crowd of these ascetics followed the British army to the field. Æthelfrith watched the wild gestures and outstretched arms of the strange company as it stood apart, intent upon prayer, and took the monks for enchanters. "Bear they arms or no," said the king, "they war against us when they cry against us to their God," and in the surprise and rout which followed the monks were the first to fall.

The British kingdoms were now utterly parted from one another. By their victory at Deorham the West-Saxons had cut off the Britons of Devon and Cornwall from the general body of their race. By his victory at Chester Æthelfrith broke this body again into two several parts, by parting the Britons of Wales from those of Cumbria and Strathclyde. From this time the warfare of Briton and Englishman died down into a warfare of separate English kingdoms against separate British kingdoms, of Northumbria against Cumbria and Strathclyde, of Mercia against modern Wales, of Wessex against the tract of British country from Mendip to the Land's End. Nor was the victory of Chester of less importance to England itself. With it Æthelfrith was at once drawn to new dreams of ambition as he looked across his southern border, where Rædwald of East Anglia was drawing the peoples of Mid-Britain under his overlordship.

The inevitable struggle between East Anglia and Northumbria seemed for a time averted by the sudden death of Æthelfrith. Marching in 617 against Rædwald, who had sheltered Eadwine, an exile from the Northumbrian kingdom, he perished in a defeat at the river Idle. Eadwine mounted the Northumbrian throne on the fall of his enemy, and carried on the work of government with an energy as ceaseless as that of Æthelfrith himself. His victories over Pict and Briton were followed by the winning of lordship over the English of Mid-Britain; Kent was bound to him in close political alliance;

and the English conquerors of the south, the people of the West-Saxons, alone remained independent. But revolt and slaughter had fatally broken the power of the West-Saxons when the Northumbrians attacked them. A story preserved by Bæda tells something of the fierceness of the struggle which ended in the subjection of the south to the overlordship of Northumbria. Eadwine gave audience in an Easter court which he held in a king's town near the river Derwent to Eumer, an envoy of Wessex, who brought a message from its king. In the midst of the conference the envoy started to his feet, drew a dagger from his robe, and rushed madly on the Northumbrian sovereign. Lilla, one of the king's war band, threw himself between Eadwine and his assassin; but so furious was the stroke that even through Lilla's body the dagger still reached its aim. The king however recovered from his wound to march on the West-Saxons; he slew and subdued all who had conspired against him, and returned victorious to his own country. The greatness of Northumbria now reached its height. Within his own dominions Eadwine displayed a genius for civil government which shows how completely the mere age of conquest had passed away. With him began the English proverb so often applied to after kings, "A woman with her babe might walk scatheless from sea to sea in Eadwine's day." Peaceful communication revived along the deserted highways; the springs by the roadside were marked with stakes, and a cup of brass set beside each for the traveler's refreshment. Some faint traditions of the Roman past may have flung their glory round this new "empire of the English"; some of its majesty had at any rate come back with its long-lost peace. A royal standard of purple and gold floated before Eadwine as he rode through the villages; a feather tuft attached to a spear, the Roman tufa, preceded him as he walked through the streets. The Northumbrian king was in fact supreme over Britain as no king of English blood had been before. Northward his frontier reached the Forth, and was guarded by a city which bore his name, Edinburgh, Eadwine's burgh, the city of Eadwine. Westward, he was master of Chester, and the fleet he equipped there subdued the isles of Anglesey and Man. South of the Humber he was owned as overlord by

the whole English race, save Kent; and even Kent was bound to him by his marriage with its king's sister.

With the Kentish queen came Paulinus, one of Augustine's followers, whose tall stooping form, slender aquiline nose, and black hair falling round a thin worn face, were long remembered in the north; and the Wise Men of Northumbria gathered to deliberate on the new faith to which Paulinus and his queen soon converted Eadwine. To finer minds its charm lay in the light it threw on the darkness which encompassed men's lives, the darkness of the future as of the past. "So seems the life of man, O king," burst forth an aged Ealdorman, "as a sparrow's flight through the hall when you are sitting at meat in winter tide, with the warm fire lighted on the hearth, but the icy rain-storm without. The sparrow flies in at one door and tarries for a moment in the light and heat of the hearth fire, and then flying forth from the other vanishes into the wintry darkness whence it came. So tarries for a moment the life of man in our sight, but what is before it, what after it, we know not. If this new teaching tells us aught certainly of these, let us follow it." Coarser argument told on the crowd. "None of your people, Eadwine, have worshiped the gods more busily than I," said Coifi the priest, "yet there are many more favored and more fortunate. Were these gods good for anything they would help their worshipers." Then leaping on horseback, he hurled his spear into the sacred temple at Godmanham, and with the rest of the Witan embraced the religion of the king.

But the faith of Woden and Thunder was not to fall without a struggle. Even in Kent a reaction against the new creed began with the death of Æthelberht. Rædwald of East Anglia resolved to serve Christ and the older gods together; and a pagan and Christian altar fronted one another in the same royal temple. The young kings of the East-Saxons burst into the church where Mellitus, the Bishop of London, was administering the Eucharist to the people, crying, "Give us that white bread you gave to our father Saba," and on the bishop's refusal drove him from their realm. The tide of reaction was checked for a time by Eadwine's conversion, until Mercia sprang into a sudden greatness as the champion of the heathen gods. Under Eadwine Mercia had

submitted to the lordship of Northumbria; but its king, Penda, saw in the rally of the old religion a chance of winning back its independence. Penda had not only united under his own rule the Mercians of the Upper Trent, the Middle-English of Leicester, the Southumbrians, and the Lindiswaras, but he had even been strong enough to tear from the West-Saxons their possessions along the Severn. So thoroughly indeed was the union of these provinces effected, that though some were detached for a time after Penda's death, the name of Mercia from this moment must be generally taken as covering the whole of them. Alone, however, he was as yet no match for Northumbria. But the old severance between the English people and the Britons was fast dying down, and Penda boldly broke through the barrier which parted the two races, and allied himself with the Welsh king, Cadwallon, in an attack on Eadwine. The armies met in 633 at Hatfield, and in the fight which followed Eadwine was defeated and slain. The victory was turned to profit by the ambition of Penda, while Northumbria was torn with the strife which followed Eadwine's fall. To complete his dominion over Mid-Britain, Penda marched against East Anglia. The East Engle had returned to heathendom from the oddly mingled religion of their first Christian king, Rædwald; but the new faith was brought back by the present king, Sigeberht. Before the threat of Penda's attack Sigeberht left his throne for a monastery, but his people dragged him again from his cell on the news of Penda's invasion in 634, in faith that his presence would bring them the favor of Heaven. The monk king was set in the forefront of the battle, but he would bear no weapon save a wand, and his fall was followed by the rout of his army and the submission of his kingdom. Meanwhile Cadwallon remained harrying in the heart of Deira, and made himself master even of York. But the triumph of the Britons was as brief as it was strange. Oswald, a second son of Æthelfrith, placed himself at the head of his race, and a small Northumbrian force gathered in 635 under their new king near the Roman Wall. Oswald set up a cross of wood as his standard, holding it with his own hands till the hollow in which it was fixed was filled in by his soldiers; then throwing himself on his knees, he cried to his host to pray to the living God.

Cadwallon, the last great hero of the British race, fell fighting on the "Heaven's Field," as after-times called the field of battle, and for seven years the power of Oswald equaled that of Æthelfrith and Eadwine.

It was not the Church of Paulinus which nerved Oswald to this struggle for the Cross. Paulinus had fled from Northumbria at Eadwine's fall; and the Roman Church in Kent shrank into inactivity before the heathen reaction. Its place in the conversion of England was taken by missionaries from Ireland. To understand, however, the true meaning of the change, we must remember that before the landing of the English in Britain the Christian Church comprised every country, save Germany, in Western Europe, as far as Ireland itself. The conquest of Britain by the pagan English thrust a wedge of heathendom into the heart of this great communion and broke it into two unequal parts. On the one side lay Italy, Spain, and Gaul, whose churches owned obedience to the See of Rome, on the other the Church of Ireland. But the condition of the two portions of Western Christendom was very different. While the vigor of Christianity in Italy and Gaul and Spain was exhausted in a bare struggle for life, Ireland, which remained unscourged by invaders, drew from its conversion an energy such as it has never known since. Christianity had been received there with a burst of popular enthusiasm, and letters and arts sprang up rapidly in its train. The science and Biblical knowledge which fled from the Continent took refuge in famous schools which made Durrow and Armagh the universities of the West. The new Christian life soon beat too strongly to brook confinement within the bounds of Ireland itself. Patrick, the first missionary of the island, had not been half a century dead when Irish Christianity flung itself with a fiery zeal into battle with the mass of heathenism which was rolling in upon the Christian world. Irish missionaries labored among the Picts of the Highlands and among the Frisians of the northern seas. An Irish missionary, Columban, founded monasteries in Burgundy and the Apennines. The canton of St. Gall still commemorates in its name another Irish missionary before whom the spirits of flood and fell fled wailing over the waters of the Lake of Constance. For a time it seemed as if the

course of the world's history was to be changed, as if the older Celtic race that Roman and German had swept before them had turned to the moral conquest of their conquerors, as if Celtic and not Latin Christianity was to mold the destinies of the churches of the West.

On a low island of barren gneiss rock off the west coast of Scotland an Irish refugee, Columba, had raised the famous monastery of Iona. Oswald in youth found refuge within its walls, and on his accession to the throne of Northumbria he called for missionaries from among its monks. The first despatched in answer to his call obtained little success. He declared on his return that among a people so stubborn and barbarous success was impossible. "Was it their stubbornness or your severity?" asked Aidan, a brother sitting by; "did you forget God's word to give them the milk first and then the meat?" All eyes turned on the speaker as fittest to undertake the abandoned mission, and Aidan sailing at their bidding fixed his bishop's stool or see in the island-peninsula of Lindisfarne. Thence, from a monastery which gave to the spot its after name of Holy Island, preachers poured forth over the heathen realms. Boisil guided a little troop of missionaries to the valley of the Tweed. Aidan himself wandered on foot, preaching among the peasants of Bernicia. The new religion served as a prelude to the Northumbrian advance. If Oswald was a saint, he was none the less resolved to build up again the realm of Eadwine. Having extended his supremacy over the Britons of Strathclyde, and won the submission of the Lindiswaras, he turned to reassert his supremacy over Wessex. The reception of the new faith became the mark of submission to his overlordship. A preacher, Birinus, had already penetrated from Gaul into Wessex; in Oswald's presence its king received baptism, and established with his assent a see for his people in the royal city of Dorchester on the Thames. Oswald ruled as wide a realm as his predecessor; but for after-times the memory of his greatness was lost in the legends of his piety. A new conception of kingship began to blend itself with that of the warlike glory of Æthelfrith or the wise administration of Eadwine. The moral power which was to reach its height in Ælfred first dawns in the story of Oswald. In his own

court the king acted as interpreter to the Irish missionaries in their efforts to convert his thegns. "By reason of his constant habit of praying or giving thanks to the Lord he was wont wherever he sat to hold his hands upturned on his knees." As he feasted with Bishop Aidan by his side, the thegn, or noble of his war band, whom he had set to give alms to the poor at his gate, told him of a multitude that still waited fasting without. The king at once bade the untasted meat before him be carried to the poor, and his silver dish be divided piecemeal among them. Aidan seized the royal hand and blessed it. "May this hand," he cried, "never grow old."

Prisoned, however, as it was by the conversion of Wessex to the central districts of England, heathendom fought desperately for life. Penda was still its rallying-point; but if his long reign was one continuous battle with the new religion, it was in fact rather a struggle against the supremacy of Northumbria than against the supremacy of the Cross. East Anglia became at last the field of contest between the two powers. In 642 Oswald marched to deliver it from Penda; but in a battle, called the battle of the Maserfeld, he was overthrown and slain. His body was mutilated and his limbs set on stakes by the brutal conqueror; but legend told that when all else of Oswald had perished, the "white hand" that Aidan had blessed still remained white and uncorrupted. For a few years after his victory at the Maserfeld Penda stood supreme in Britain. Wessex owned his overlordship as it had owned that of Oswald, and its king threw off the Christian faith and married Penda's sister. Even Deira seems to have bowed to him, and Bernicia alone refused to yield. Year by year Penda carried his ravages over the north; once he reached even the royal city, the impregnable rock-fortress of Bamborough. Despairing of success in an assault, he pulled down the cottages around, and, piling their wood against its walls, fired the mass in a fair wind that drove the flames on the town. "See, Lord, what ill Penda is doing," cried Aidan from his hermit cell in the islet of Farne, as he saw the smoke drifting over the city; and a change of wind — so ran the legend of Northumbria's agony — drove back at the words the flames on those who kindled them. But in spite of Penda's victories, the faith which he had so often struck down revived every-

where around him. Burnt and harried as it was, Bernicia still clung to the Cross. The East-Saxons again became Christian. Penda's own son, whom he had set over the Middle-English, received baptism and teachers from Lindisfarne. The missionaries of the new faith appeared fearlessly among the Mercians themselves, and Penda gave no hindrance. Heathen to the last, he stood by unheeding if any were willing to hear; hating and scorning with a certain grand sincerity of nature "those whom he saw not doing the works of the faith they had received." But the track of Northumbrian missionaries along the eastern coast marked the growth of Northumbrian overlordship, and the old man roused himself for a last stroke at his foes. On the death of Oswald, Oswiu had been called to fill his throne, and in 655 he met the pagan host near the river Winwæd. It was in vain that the Northumbrians had sought to avert Penda's attack by offers of ornaments and costly gifts. "Since the pagans will not take our gifts," Oswiu cried at last, "let us offer them to One that will"; and he vowed that if successful he would dedicate his daughter to God and endow twelve monasteries in his realm. Victory at last declared for the faith of Christ. The river over which the Mercians fled was swollen with a great rain; it swept away the fragments of the heathen host, Penda himself was slain, and the cause of the older gods was lost forever.

The terrible struggle was followed by a season of peace. For four years after the battle of Winwæd Mercia was subject to Oswiu's overlordship. But in 659 a general rising of the people threw off the Northumbrian yoke. The heathendom of Mercia however was dead with Penda. "Being thus freed," Bæda tells us, "the Mercians with their king rejoiced to serve the true King, Christ." Its three provinces, the earlier Mercia, the Middle-English, and the Lindiswaras, were united in the bishopric of Ceadda, the St. Chad to whom the Mercian See of Lichfield still looks as its founder. Ceadda was a monk of Lindisfarne, so simple and lowly in temper that he traveled on foot on his long mission journeys, till Archbishop Theodore in later days with his own hands lifted him on horseback. The poetry of Christian enthusiasm breaks out in his death legend, as it tells us how voices of

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singers singing sweetly descended from heaven to the little cell beside St. Mary's church where the bishop lay dying. Then "the same song ascended from the roof again, and returned heavenward by the way that it came." It was the soul of his brother, the missionary Cedd, come with a choir of angels to solace the last hours of Ceadda. In Northumbria the work of his fellow missionaries has almost been lost in the glory of Cuthbert. No story better lights up for us the new religious life of the time than the story of this apostle of the Lowlands. It carries us at its outset into the northernmost part of Northumbria, the country of the Teviot and the Tweed. Born on the southern edge of the Lammermoor, Cuthbert found shelter at eight years old in a widow's house in the little village of Wrangholm. Already in youth there was a poetic sensibility beneath the robust frame of the boy, which caught even in the chance word of a game a call to higher things. Later on, a traveler, coming in his white mantle over the hillside and stopping his horse to tend Cuthbert's injured knee, seemed to him an angel. The boy's shepherd life carried him to the bleak upland, still famous as a sheepwalk, though the scant herbage scarce veils the whinstone rock, and there meteors plunging into the night became to him a company of angelic spirits, carrying the soul of Bishop Aidan heavenward. Slowly Cuthbert's longings settled into a resolute will towards a religious life, and he made his way at last to a group of log shanties in the midst of an untilled solitude, where a few Irish monks from Lindisfarne had settled in the mission station of Melrose. To-day the land is a land of poetry and romance. Cheviot and Lammermoor, Ettrick and Teviotdale, Yarrow and Annan-water, are musical with old ballads and border minstrelsy. Agriculture has chosen its valleys for her favorite seat, and drainage and steam power have turned sedgy marshes into farm and meadow. But to see the Lowlands as they were in Cuthbert's day we must sweep meadow and farm away again, and replace them by vast solitudes, dotted here and there with clusters of wooden hovels, and crossed by boggy tracks over which travelers rode spear in hand and eye kept cautiously about them. The Northumbrian peasantry among whom he journeyed were for the most part Christians only in name. With Teu-

tonic indifference they had yielded to their thegns in nominally accepting the new Christianity, as these had yielded to the king. But they retained their old superstitions side by side with the new worship; plague or mishap drove them back to a reliance on their heathen charms and amulets; and if trouble befell the Christian preachers who came settling among them, they took it as proof of the wrath of the older gods. When some log rafts, which were floating down the Tyne for the construction of an abbey at its mouth, drifted with the monks who were at work on them out to sea, the rustic bystanders shouted, "Let nobody pray for them; let nobody pity these men, who have taken away from us our old worship; and how their new-fangled customs are to be kept nobody knows." On foot, on horseback, Cuthbert wandered among listeners such as these, choosing above all the remoter mountain villages from whose roughness and poverty other teachers turned aside. Unlike his Irish comrades, he needed no interpreter as he passed from village to village; the frugal, long-headed Northumbrians listened willingly to one who was himself a peasant of the Lowlands, and who had caught the rough Northumbrian burr along the banks of the Tweed. His patience, his humorous good sense, the sweetness of his look, told for him, and not less the stout vigorous frame which fitted the peasant preacher for the hard life he had chosen. "Never did man die of hunger who served God faithfully," he would say, when nightfall found them supperless in the waste. "Look at the eagle overhead! God can feed us through him if He will" —and once at least he owed his meal to a fish that the scared bird let fall. A snow-storm drove his boat on the coast of Fife. "The snow closes the road along the shore," mourned his comrades; "the storm bars our way over sea." "There is still the way of heaven that lies open," said Cuthbert.

While missionaries were thus laboring among its peasantry, Northumbria saw the rise of a number of monasteries, not bound indeed by the strict ties of the Benedictine rule, but gathered on the loose Celtic model of the family or the clan round some noble and wealthy person who sought devotional retirement. The most notable and wealthy of these houses was that of Streoneshealh, where Hild, a woman of royal

race, reared her abbey on the summit of the dark cliffs of Whitby, looking out over the northern sea. Her counsel was sought even by nobles and kings; and the double monastery over which she ruled became a seminary of bishops and priests. The sainted John of Beverley was among her scholars. But the name which really throws glory over Whitby is the name of a lay brother from whose lips flowed the first great English song. Though well advanced in years, Cædmon had learnt nothing of the art of verse, the alliterative jingle so common among his fellows, "wherefore being sometimes at feasts, when all agreed for glee's sake to sing in turn, he no sooner saw the harp come towards him than he rose from the board and turned homewards. Once when he had done thus, and gone from the feast to the stable where he had that night charge of the cattle, there appeared to him in his sleep One who said, greeting him by name, 'Sing, Cædmon, some song to Me.' 'I cannot sing,' he answered; 'for this cause left I the feast and came hither.' He who talked with him answered, 'However that be, you shall sing to Me.' 'What shall I sing?' rejoined Cædmon. 'The beginning of created things,' replied He. In the morning the cowherd stood before Hild and told his dream. Abbess and brethren alike concluded 'that heavenly grace had been conferred on him by the Lord.' They translated for Cædmon a passage in Holy Writ, 'bidding him, if he could, put the same into verse.' The next morning he gave it them composed in excellent verse, whereon the abbess, understanding the divine grace in the man, bade him quit the secular habit and take on him the monastic life." Piece by piece the sacred story was thus thrown into Cædmon's poem. "He sang of the creation of the world, of the origin of man, and of all the history of Israel; of their departure from Egypt and entering into the Promised Land; of the incarnation, passion, and resurrection of Christ, and of his ascension; of the terror of future judgment, the horror of hell-pangs, and the joys of heaven."

To men of that day this sudden burst of song seemed a thing necessarily divine. "Others after him strove to compose religious poems, but none could vie with him, for he learned the art of poetry not from men nor of men, but from

God." It was not indeed that any change had been wrought by Cædmon in the outer form of English song. The collection of poems which is connected with his name has come down to us in a later West-Saxon version, and though modern criticism is still in doubt as to their authorship, they are certainly the work of various hands. The verse, whether of Cædmon or of other singers, is accented and alliterative, without conscious art or development or the delight that springs from reflection, a verse swift and direct, but leaving behind it a sense of strength rather than of beauty, obscured too by harsh metaphors and involved construction. But it is eminently the verse of warriors, the brief passionate expression of brief passionate emotions. Image after image, phrase after phrase, in these early poems, start out vivid, harsh, and emphatic. The very meter is rough with a sort of self-violence and repression; the verses fall like sword-strokes in the thick of battle. The love of natural description, the background of melancholy which gives its pathos to English verse, the poet only shared with earlier singers. But the faith of Christ brought in, as we have seen, new realms of fancy. The legends of the heavenly light, Bæda's story of "The Sparrow," show the side of English temperament to which Christianity appealed — its sense of the vague, vast mystery of the world and of man, its dreamy revolt against the narrow bounds of experience and life. It was this new poetic world which combined with the old in the so-called epic of Cædmon. In its various poems the vagueness and daring of the Teutonic imagination pass beyond the limits of the Hebrew story to a "swart hell without light and full of flame," swept only at dawn by the icy east wind, on whose floor lie bound the apostate angels. The human energy of the German race, its sense of the might of individual manhood, transformed in English verse the Hebrew Tempter into a rebel Satan, disdainful of vassalage to God. "I may be a God as He," Satan cries amidst his torments. "Evil it seems to me to cringe to Him for any good." Even in this terrible outburst of the fallen spirit, we catch the new pathetic note which the Northern melancholy was to give to our poetry. "This is to me the chief of sorrow, that Adam, wrought of earth, should hold my strong seat — should dwell in joy while

we endure this torment. Oh, that for one winter hour I had power with my hands, then with this host would I — but around me lie the iron bonds, and this chain galls me." On the other hand the enthusiasm for the Christian God, faith in whom had been bought so dearly by years of desperate struggle, breaks out in long rolls of sonorous epithets of praise and adoration. The temper of the poets brings them near to the earlier fire and passion of the Hebrew, as the events of their time brought them near to the old Bible history with its fights and wanderings. "The wolves sing their dread even-song; the fowls of war, greedy of battle, dewy-feathered, scream around the host of Pharaoh," as wolf howled and eagle screamed round the host of Penda. Everywhere we mark the new grandeur, depth, and fervor of tone which the German race was to give to the religion of the East.

But even before Cædmon had begun to sing, the Christian Church of Northumbria was torn in two by a strife whose issue was decided in the same abbey of Whitby where Cædmon dwelt. The labors of Aidan, the victories of Oswald and Oswiu, seemed to have annexed England to the Irish Church. The monks of Lindisfarne, or of the new religious houses whose foundation followed that of Lindisfarne, looked for their ecclesiastical tradition, not to Rome but to Ireland; and quoted for their guidance the instructions, not of Gregory, but of Columba. Whatever claims of supremacy over the whole English Church might be pressed by the See of Canterbury, the real metropolitan of the Church as it existed in the north of England was the Abbot of Iona. But Oswiu's queen brought with her from Kent the loyalty of the Kentish Church to the Roman See, and a Roman party at once formed about her. Her efforts were seconded by those of two young thegns, whose love of Rome mounted to a passionate fanaticism. The life of Wilfrid of York was a series of flights to Rome and returns to England, of wonderful successes in pleading the right of Rome to the obedience of the Church of Northumbria, and of as wonderful defeats. Benedict Biscop worked towards the same end in a quieter fashion, coming backwards and forwards across the sea with books and relics and cunning masons and painters to rear a great

church and monastery at Wearmouth, whose brethren owned obedience to the Roman See. In 652 they first set out for a visit to the imperial city; and the elder, Benedict Biscop, soon returned to preach ceaselessly against the Irish usages. He was followed by Wilfrid, whose energy soon brought the quarrel to a head. The strife between the two parties rose so high at last that Oswiu was prevailed upon to summon in 664 a great council at Whitby, where the future ecclesiastical allegiance of England should be decided. The points actually contested were trivial enough. Colman, Aidan's successor at Holy Island, pleaded for the Irish fashion of the tonsure, and for the Irish time of keeping Easter; Wilfrid pleaded for the Roman. The one disputant appealed to the authority of Columba, the other to that of St. Peter. "You own," cried the king at last to Colman, "that Christ gave to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven — has He given such power to Columba?" The bishop could but answer "No." "Then will I rather obey the porter of heaven," said Oswiu, "lest when I reach its gates he who has the keys in his keeping turn his back on me, and there be none to open." The importance of Oswiu's judgment was never doubted at Lindisfarne, where Colman, followed by the whole of the Irish-born brethren and thirty of their English fellows, forsook the See of Aidan and sailed away to Iona. Trivial in fact as were the actual points of difference which severed the Roman Church from the Irish, the question to which communion Northumbria should belong was of immense moment to the after fortunes of England. Had the Church of Aidan finally won, the later ecclesiastical history of England would probably have resembled that of Ireland. Devoid of that power of organization which was the strength of the Roman Church, the Celtic Church in its own Irish home took the clan system of the country as the basis of Church government. Tribal quarrels and ecclesiastical controversies became inextricably confounded; and the clergy, robbed of all really spiritual influence, contributed no element save that of disorder to the state. Hundreds of wandering bishops, a vast religious authority wielded by hereditary chieftains, the dissociation of piety from morality, the absence of those larger and more humanizing influences which contact with a wider world alone

can give, this is the picture which the Irish Church of later times presents to us. It was from such a chaos as this that England was saved by the victory of Rome in the Synod of Whitby.

The Church of England, as we know it to-day, is the work, so far as its outer form is concerned, of a Greek monk, Theodore of Tarsus, whom Rome, after her victory at Whitby, despatched in 669 as Archbishop of Canterbury, to secure England to her sway. Theodore's work was determined in its main outlines by the previous history of the English people. The conquest of the Continent had been wrought either by races such as the Goths, who were already Christian, or by heathens like the Franks, who bowed to the Christian faith of the nations they conquered. To this oneness of religion between the German invaders of the empire and their Roman subjects was owing the preservation of all that survived of the Roman world. The Church everywhere remained untouched. The Christian bishop became the defender of the conquered Italian or Gaul against his Gothic and Lombard conqueror, the mediator between the German and his subjects, the one bulwark against barbaric violence and oppression. To the barbarian on the other hand he was the representative of all that was venerable in the past, the living record of law, of letters, and of art. But in Britain priesthood and people had been exterminated together. When Theodore came to organize the Church of England, the very memory of the older Christian Church which existed in Roman Britain had passed away. The first Christian missionaries, strangers in a heathen land, attached themselves necessarily to the courts of the kings, who were their first converts, and whose conversion was generally followed by that of their people. The English bishops were thus at first royal chaplains, and their diocese was naturally nothing but the kingdom. The kingdom of Kent became the diocese of Canterbury, and the kingdom of Northumbria the diocese of York. In this way too realms which are all but forgotten are commemorated in the limits of existing sees. That of Rochester represented till of late an obscure kingdom of West Kent, and the frontier of the original kingdom of Mercia might be recovered by following the map of the ancient bishopric of Lichfield. Theodore's

first work was to order the dioceses; his second was to add many new sees to the old ones, and to group all of them round the one center of Canterbury. All ties between England and the Irish Church were roughly broken. Lindisfarne sank into obscurity with the flight of Colman and his monks. The new prelates, gathered in synod after synod, acknowledged the authority of their one primate. The organization of the episcopate was followed during the next hundred years by the development of the parish system. The loose system of the mission station, the monastery from which priest and bishop went forth on journey after journey to preach and baptize, as Aidan went forth from Lindisfarne or Cuthbert from Melrose, naturally disappeared as the land became Christian. The missionaries became settled clergy. The holding of the English noble or landowner became the parish, and his chaplain the parish priest, as the king's chaplain had become the bishop, and the kingdom his diocese. A source of permanent endowment for the clergy was found at a later time in the revival of the Jewish system of tithes, and in the annual gift to Church purposes of a tenth of the produce of the soil; while discipline within the Church itself was provided for by an elaborate code of sin and penance in which the principle of compensation, which lay at the root of Teutonic legislation, crept into the relations between God and the soul.

In his work of organization, in his increase of bishoprics, in his arrangement of dioceses, and the way in which he grouped them round the See of Canterbury, in his national synods and ecclesiastical canons, Theodore was unconsciously doing a political work. The old divisions of kingdoms and tribes about him, divisions which had sprung for the most part from mere accidents of the conquest, were fast breaking down. The smaller states were by this time practically absorbed by the three larger ones, and of these three Mercia and Wessex had for a time bowed to the overlordship of Northumbria. The tendency to national unity which was to characterize the new England had thus already declared itself; but the policy of Theodore clothed with a sacred form and surrounded with divine sanctions a unity which as yet rested on no basis but the sword. The single throne of the one

primate at Canterbury accustomed men's minds to the thought of a single throne for their one temporal overlord at York, or, as in later days, at Lichfield or at Winchester. The regular subordination of priest to bishop, of bishop to primate, in the administration of the Church, supplied a mold on which the civil organization of the state quietly shaped itself. Above all, the councils gathered by Theodore were the first of all national gatherings for general legislation. It was at a much later time that the Wise Men of Wessex, or Northumbria, or Mercia, learned to come together in the Witenagemot of all England. It was the ecclesiastical synods which by their example led the way to our national parliament, as it was the canons enacted in such synods which led the way to a national system of law. But if the movement towards national unity was furthered by the centralizing tendencies of the Church, it was as yet hindered by the upgrowth of a great rival power to contest the supremacy with Northumbria. Mercia, as we have seen, had recovered from the absolute subjection in which it was left after Penda's fall by shaking off the supremacy of Oswiu, and by choosing Wulfhere for its king. Wulfhere was a vigorous and active ruler, and the peaceful reign of Oswiu left him free to build up again during the sixteen years of his rule the power which had been lost at Penda's death. Penda's realm in Central Britain was quickly restored, and Wulfhere's dominion extended even over the Severn and embraced the lower valley of the Wye. He had even more than his father's success. After a great victory in 661 over the West-Saxons, his ravages were carried into the heart of Wessex, and the valley of the Thames opened to his army. To the eastward, the East-Saxons and London came to own his supremacy; while southward he pushed across the river over Surrey. In the same year, 661, Sussex, perhaps in dread of the West-Saxons, found protection in accepting Wulfhere's overlordship, and its king was rewarded by a gift of two outlying settlements of the Jutes, the Isle of Wight, and the lands of the Meon-wara along the Southampton Water, which we must suppose had been reduced by Mercian arms. The Mercian supremacy which thus reached from the Humber to the Channel and stretched westward to the Wye was the main political fact in Britain when Theodore landed on its shores.

In fact, with the death of Oswiu in 670 all effort was finally abandoned by Northumbria to crush the rival states in Central or Southern Britain.

The industrial progress of the Mercian kingdom went hand in hand with its military advance. The forests of its western border, the marshes of its eastern coast, were being cleared and drained by monastic colonies, whose success shows the hold which Christianity had now gained over its people. Heathenism indeed still held its own in the western woodlands; we may perhaps see Woden-worshiping miners at Alcester in the demons of the legend of Bishop Ecgwine of Worcester, who drowned the preacher's voice with the din of their hammers. But in spite of their hammers Ecgwine's preaching left one lasting mark behind it. The bishop heard how a swineherd, coming out from the forest depths on a sunny glade, saw forms which were possibly those of the Three Fair Women of the old German mythology, seated round a mystic bush, and singing their unearthly song. In his fancy the fair women transformed themselves into a vision of the Mother of Christ; and the silent glade soon became the site of an abbey dedicated to her, and of a town which sprang up under its shelter — the Evesham which was to be hallowed in after-time by the fall of Earl Simon of Leicester. Wilder even than the western woodland was the desolate fen country on the eastern border of the kingdom, stretching from the "Holland," the sunk, hollow land of Lincolnshire, to the channel of the Ouse, a wilderness of shallow waters and reedy islets wrapped in its own dark mist veil and tenanted only by flocks of screaming wild fowl. Here through the liberality of King Wulfhere rose the abbey of Medeshamstead, our later Peterborough. On its northern border a hermit, Botulf, founded a little house, which as ages went by became our Botulf's town or Boston. The abbey of Ely was founded in the same wild fen country by the Lady Æthelthryth, the wife of King Ecgfrith, who in the year 670 succeeded Oswiu on the throne of Northumbria. Here, too, Guthlac, a youth of the royal race of Mercia, sought a refuge from the world in the solitude of Crowland, and so great was the reverence he won, that only two years had passed since his death when the stately abbey of Crowland rose over his

tomb. Earth was brought in boats to form a site; the buildings rested on oaken piles driven into the marsh, a stone church replaced the hermit's cell, and the toil of the new brotherhood changed the pools around them into fertile meadow-land.

But while Mercia was building up its dominion in Mid-Britain, Northumbria was far from having sunk from its old renown either in government or war. Ecgfrith had succeeded his father Oswiu in 670, and made no effort to reverse his policy, or attempt to build up again a supremacy over the states of Southern Britain. His ambition turned rather to conquests over the Briton than to victories over his fellow Englishmen. The war between Briton and Englishman, which had languished since the battle of Chester, had been revived some twenty years before by an advance of the West-Saxons to the southwest. Unable to save the possessions of Wessex in the Severn valley and on the Cotswolds from the grasp of Penda, the West-Saxon king, Cenwealh, seized the moment when Mercia was absorbed in the last struggle of Penda against Northumbria to seek for compensation in an attack on his Welsh neighbors. A victory at Bradford on the Avon enabled him to overrun the country north of Mendip which had till then been held by the Britons; and a second campaign in 658, which ended in a victory on the skirts of the great forest that covered Somerset to the east, settled the West-Saxons as conquerors round the sources of the Parret. It may have been the example of the West-Saxons which spurred Ecgfrith to enlarge the bounds of his kingdom by a series of attacks upon his British neighbors in the west. His armies chased the Britons from Southern Cumbria and made the districts of Carlisle, the Lake country, and our Lancashire English ground. His success in this quarter was quickly followed by fresh gain in the north, where he pushed his conquests over the Scots beyond Clydesdale, and subdued the Picts over the Firth of Forth, so that their territory on the northern bank of the Forth was from this time reckoned as Northumbrian ground. The monastery of Abercorn on the shore of the Firth of Forth, in which a few years later a Northumbrian bishop, Trumwine, fixed the seat of a new bishopric, was a sign of the subjection of the Picts to the

Northumbrian overlordship. Even when recalled from the wars to his southern border by an attack of Wulfhere's in 675, the vigorous and warlike Ecgfrith proved a different foe from the West-Saxon or the Jute, and the defeat of the king of Mercia was so complete that he was glad to purchase peace by giving up to his conqueror the province of the Lindiswaras or Lincolnshire. A large part of the conquered country of the Lake district was bestowed upon the See of Lindisfarne, which was at this time filled by one whom we have seen before laboring as the Apostle of the Lowlands. After years of mission labor at Melrose, Cuthbert had quitted it for Holy Island, and preached among the moors of Northumberland as he had preached beside the banks of the Tweed. He remained there through the great secession which followed on the Synod of Whitby, and became prior of the dwindled company of brethren, now torn with endless disputes, against which his patience and good humor struggled in vain. Worn out at last he fled to a little island of basaltic rock, one of a group not far from Ida's fortress of Bamborough, strewn for the most part with kelp and seaweed, the home of the gull and the seal. In the midst of it rose his hut of rough stones and turf, dug deep into the rock and roofed with logs and straw.

The reverence for his sanctity dragged Cuthbert back in old age to fill the vacant See of Lindisfarne. He entered Carlisle, which the king had bestowed upon the bishopric, at a moment when all Northumbria was waiting for news of a fresh campaign of Ecgfrith's against the Britons in the north. The power of Northumbria was already however fatally shaken. In the south, Mercia had in 679 renewed the attempt which had been checked by Wulfhere's defeat. His successor, the Mercian king Æthelred, again seized the province of the Lindiswaras, and the war he thus began with Northumbria was only ended by a peace negotiated through Archbishop Theodore, which left him master of Middle England. Old troubles too revived on Ecgfrith's northern frontier, where a rising of the Picts forced him once more to cross the Firth of Forth, and march in the year 685 into their land. A sense of coming ill weighed on Northumbria, and its dread was quickened by a memory of the curses which had been

pronounced by the bishops of Ireland on the king, when his navy, setting out a year before from the newly conquered western coast, swept the Irish shores in a raid which seemed like sacrilege to those who loved the home of Aidan and Columba. As Cuthbert bent over a Roman fountain which still stood unharmed amongst the ruins of Carlisle, the anxious bystanders thought they caught words of ill-omen falling from the old man's lips. "Perhaps," he seemed to murmur, "at this very hour the peril of the fight is over and done." "Watch and pray," he said, when they questioned him on the morrow; "watch and pray." In a few days more a solitary fugitive escaped from the slaughter told that the Picts had turned desperately to bay as the English army entered Fife; and that Ecgfrith and the flower of his nobles lay, a ghastly ring of corpses, on the far-off moorland of Nectansmere.

To Cuthbert the tidings were tidings of death. His bishopric was soon laid aside, and two months after his return to his island hermitage the old man lay dying, murmuring to the last words of concord and peace. A signal of his death had been agreed upon, and one of those who stood by ran with a candle in each hand to a place whence the light might be seen by a monk who was looking out from the watch-tower of Lindisfarne. As the tiny gleam flashed over the dark reach of sea, and the watchman hurried with his news into the church, the brethren of Holy Island were singing, as it chanced, the words of the Psalmist: "Thou hast cast us out and scattered us abroad; Thou hast also been displeased; Thou hast shown thy people heavy things; Thou hast given us a drink of deadly wine." The chant was the dirge, not of Cuthbert only, but of his Church and his people. Over both hung the gloom of a seeming failure. Strangers who knew not Iona and Columba entered into the heritage of Aidan and Cuthbert. As the Roman communion folded England again beneath her wing, men forgot that a Church which passed utterly away had battled with Rome for the spiritual headship of Western Christendom, and that throughout the great struggle with the heathen reaction of Mid-Britain the new religion had its center not at Canterbury, but at Lindisfarne. Nor were men long to remember that

from the days of Æthelfrith to the days of Ecgfrith English politics had found their center at York. But forgotten or no, Northumbria had done its work. By its missionaries and by its sword it had won England from heathendom to the Christian Church. It had given her a new poetic literature. Its monasteries were already the seat of whatever intellectual life the country possessed. Above all it had first gathered together into a loose political unity the various tribes of the English people, and by standing at their head for half a century had accustomed them to a national life, out of which England, as we have it now, was to spring.

Section IV. — The Three Kingdoms, 685-828

The supremacy of Northumbria over the English people had fallen forever with the death of Oswiu, and its power over the tribes of the north was as completely broken by the death of Ecgfrith and the defeat of Nectansmere. To the north, the flight of Bishop Trumwine from Abercorn announced the revolt of the Picts from her rule. In the south, Mercia proved a formidable rival under Æthelred, who had succeeded Wulfhere in 675. Already his kingdom reached from the Humber to the Channel; and Æthelred in the first years of his reign had finally reduced Kent beneath his overlordship. All hope of national union seemed indeed at an end, for the revival of the West-Saxon power at this moment completed the parting of the land into three states of nearly equal power, out of which it seemed impossible that unity could come. Since their overthrow at Faddiley, a hundred years before, the West-Saxons had been weakened by anarchy and civil war, and had been at the mercy alike of the rival English states and of the Britons. We have seen however that in 652 a revival of power had enabled them to drive back the Britons to the Parret. A second interval of order in 682 strengthened King Centwine again to take up war with the Britons and push his frontier as far as the Quantocks. A third rally of the West-Saxons in 685 under Ceadwalla enabled them to turn on their English enemies and conquer Sussex. Ine, the greatest of their early kings, whose reign covered the long period from 688 to 726, carried on

during the whole of it the war for supremacy. Eastward, he forced Kent, Essex, and London to his own rule. On the west, he pushed his way southward round the marshes of the Parret to a more fertile territory, and guarded the frontier of his new conquests by a fortress on the banks of the Tone, which has grown into the present Taunton. The West-Saxons thus became masters of the whole district which now bears the name of Somerset, the land of the Somersætas, where the Tor rose like an island out of a waste of flood-drowned fen that stretched westward to the Channel. At the base of this hill Ine established on the site of an older British foundation his famous monastery of Glastonbury. The little hamlet in which it stood took its English name from one of the English families, the Glæstings, who chose the spot for their settlement; but it had long been a religious shrine of the Britons, and the tradition that a second Patrick rested there drew thither the wandering scholars of Ireland. The first inhabitants of Ine's abbey found, as they alleged, "an ancient church, built by no art of man"; and beside this relic of its older Welsh owners, Ine founded his own abbey church of stone. The spiritual charge of his conquests he committed to his kinsman Ealdhelm, the most famous scholar of his day, who became the first bishop of the new See of Sherborne, which the king formed out of the districts west of Selwood and the Frome, to meet the needs of the new parts of his kingdom. Ine's code, the earliest collection of West-Saxon laws which remains to us, shows a wise solicitude to provide for the civil as well as the ecclesiastical needs of the mixed population over which he now ruled. His repulse of the Mercians, when they at last attacked Wessex, proved how well he could provide for its defense. Æthelred's reign of thirty years was one of almost unbroken peace, and his activity mainly showed itself in the planting and endowment of monasteries, which gradually changed the face of the realm. Ceolred, however, who in 709 became king of Mercia, took up the strife with Wessex for the overlordship of the south, and in 715 he marched into the very heart of Wessex; but he was repulsed in a bloody encounter at Wanborough. Able however as Ine was to hold Mercia at bay, he was unable to hush the civil strife that was the curse of Wessex,

and a wild legend tells the story of the disgust which drove him from the world. He had feasted royally at one of his country houses, and on the morrow, as he rode from it, his queen bade him turn back thither. The king returned to find his house stripped of curtains and vessels, and foul with refuse and the dung of cattle, while in the royal bed where he had slept with Æthelburh rested a sow with her farrow of pigs. The scene had no need of the queen's comment: "See, my lord, how the fashion of this world passeth away!" In 726 Ine laid down his crown, and sought peace and death in a pilgrimage to Rome.

The anarchy that had driven Ine from the throne broke out on his departure in civil strife, which left Wessex an easy prey to the successor of Ceolred. Among those who sought Guthlac's retirement at Crowland came Æthelbald, a son of Penda's brother, flying from Ceolred's hate. Driven off again and again by the king's pursuit, Æthelbald still returned to the little hut he had built beside the hermitage, and comforted himself in hours of despair with his companion's words. "Know how to wait," said Guthlac, "and the kingdom will come to thee; not by violence or rapine, but by the hand of God." In 716 Ceolred fell frenzy smitten at his board, and Mercia chose Æthelbald for its king. For the first ten years of his reign he shrank from a conflict with the victor of Wanborough; but with Ine's withdrawal he took up again the fierce struggle with Wessex for the complete supremacy of the south. He penetrated into the very heart of the West-Saxon kingdom, and his siege and capture of the royal town of Somerton in 733 ended the war. For twenty years the overlordship of Mercia was recognized by all Britain south of the Humber. It was at the head of the forces, not of Mercia only, but of East Anglia and Kent, as well as of the West-Saxons, that Æthelbald marched against the Welsh; and he styled himself "King not of the Mercians only, but of all the neighboring peoples who are called by the common name of Southern English." But the aim of Æthelbald was destined to the same failure as that of his predecessors. For twenty years indeed he met the constant outbreaks of his new subjects with success; and it was not till 754 that a general rising forced him to call his whole

strength to the field. At the head of his own Mercians and of the subject hosts of Kent, Essex, and East Anglia, Æthelbald marched to the field of Burford, where the West-Saxons were again marshaled under the golden dragon of their race; but after hours of desperate fighting in the forefront of the battle, a sudden panic seized the Mercian king, and the supremacy of Mid-Britain passed away forever as he fled first of his army from the field. Three years later he was surprised and slain in a night attack by his ealdormen; and in the anarchy that followed, Kent, Essex, and East Anglia threw off the yoke of Mercia.

While the two southern kingdoms were wasting their energies in this desperate struggle, Northumbria had set aside its efforts at conquest for the pursuits of peace. Under the reigns of Ecgfrith's successors, Aldfrith the Learned and the four kings who followed him, the kingdom became in the middle of the eighth century the literary center of Western Europe. No schools were more famous than those of Jarrow and York. The whole learning of the age seemed to be summed up in a Northumbrian scholar. Bæda — the Venerable Bede, as later times styled him — was born in 673, nine years after the Synod of Whitby, on ground which passed a year later to Benedict Biscop as the site of the great abbey which he reared by the mouth of the Wear. His youth was trained and his long tranquil life was wholly spent in an offshoot of Benedict's house which was founded by his friend Ceolfrid. Bæda never stirred from Jarrow. "I have spent my whole life in the same monastery," he says, "and while attentive to the rule of my order and the service of the Church my constant pleasure lay in learning, or teaching, or writing." The words sketch for us a scholar's life, the more touching in its simplicity that it is the life of the first great English scholar. The quiet grandeur of a life consecrated to knowledge, the tranquil pleasure that lies in learning and teaching and writing, dawned for Englishmen in the story of Bæda. While still young, he became teacher; and six hundred monks, besides strangers that flocked thither for instruction, formed his school of Jarrow. It is hard to imagine how among the toils of the schoolmaster and the duties of the monk Bæda could have found time for the com-

position of the numerous works that made his name famous in the West. But materials for study had accumulated in Northumbria through the journeys of Wilfrid and Benedict Biscop and the libraries which were forming at Wearmouth and York. The tradition of the older Irish teachers still lingered to direct the young scholar into that path of Scriptural interpretation to which he chiefly owed his fame. Greek, a rare accomplishment in the West, came to him from the school which the Greek Archbishop Theodore founded beneath the walls of Canterbury. His skill in the ecclesiastical chant was derived from a Roman cantor whom Pope Vitalian sent in the train of Benedict Biscop. Little by little the young scholar thus made himself master of the whole range of the science of his time; he became, as Burke rightly styled him, "the father of English learning." The tradition of the older classic culture was first revived for England in his quotations of Plato and Aristotle, of Seneca and Cicero, of Lucretius and Ovid. Vergil cast over him the same spell that he cast over Dante; verses from the Æneid break his narratives of martyrdoms, and the disciple ventures on the track of the great master in a little eclogue descriptive of the approach of spring. His work was done with small aid from others. "I am my own secretary," he writes; "I make my own notes. I am my own librarian." But forty-five works remained after his death to attest his prodigious industry. In his own eyes and those of his contemporaries the most important among these were the commentaries and homilies upon various books of the Bible which he had drawn from the writings of the Fathers. But he was far from confining himself to theology. In treatises compiled as text-books for his scholars Bæda threw together all that the world had then accumulated in astronomy and meteorology, in physics and music, in philosophy, grammar, rhetoric, arithmetic, medicine. But the encyclopedic character of his researches left him in heart a simple Englishman. He loved his own English tongue; he was skilled in English song; his last work was a translation into English of the Gospel of St. John, and almost the last words that broke from his lips were some English rhymes upon death.

But the noblest proof of his love of England lies in the

work which immortalizes his name. In his "Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation" Bæda became the first English historian. All that we really know of the century and a half that follows the landing of Augustine we know from him. Wherever his own personal observation extended, the story is told with admirable detail and force. He is hardly less full or accurate in the portions which he owed to his Kentish friends, Albinus and Nothelm. What he owed to no informant was his own exquisite faculty of story-telling, and yet no story of his own telling is so touching as the story of his death. Two weeks before the Easter of 735 the old man was seized with an extreme weakness and loss of breath. He still preserved, however, his usual pleasantness and good humor, and in spite of prolonged sleeplessness continued his lectures to the pupils about him. Verses of his own English tongue broke from time to time from the master's lips — rude rhymes that told how before the "need-fare," Death's stern "must-go," none can enough bethink him what is to be his doom for good or ill. The tears of Bæda's scholars mingled with his song. "We never read without weeping," writes one of them. So the days rolled on to Ascension-tide, and still master and pupils toiled at their work, for Bæda longed to bring to an end his version of St. John's Gospel into the English tongue, and his extracts from Bishop Isidore. "I don't want my boys to read a lie," he answered those who would have had him rest, "or to work to no purpose after I am gone." A few days before Ascension-tide his sickness grew upon him, but he spent the whole day in teaching, only saying cheerfully to his scholars, "Learn with what speed you may; I know not how long I may last." The dawn broke on another sleepless night, and again the old man called his scholars round him and bade them write. "There is still a chapter wanting," said the scribe, as the morning drew on, "and it is hard for thee to question thyself any longer." "It is easily done," said Bæda; "take thy pen and write quickly." Amid tears and farewells the day wore away to eventide. "There is yet one sentence unwritten, dear master," said the boy. "Write it quickly," bade the dying man. "It is finished now," said the little scribe at last. "You speak truth," said the master; "all is finished now." Placed upon the pavement, his head sup-

ported in his scholars' arms, his face turned to the spot where he was wont to pray, Bæda chanted the solemn "Glory to God." As his voice reached the close of his song he passed quietly away.

First among English scholars, first among English theologians, first among English historians, it is in the monk of Jarrow that English literature strikes its roots. In the six hundred scholars who gathered round him for instruction he is the father of our national education. In his physical treatises he is the first figure to which our science looks back. Bæda was a statesman as well as a scholar, and the letter which in the last year of his life he addressed to Ecgberht of York shows how vigorously he proposed to battle against the growing anarchy of Northumbria. But his plans of reform came too late, though a king like Eadberht, with his brother Ecgberht, the first Archbishop of York, might for a time revive the fading glories of his kingdom. Eadberht repelled an attack of Æthelbald on his southern border; while at the same time he carried on a successful war against the Picts. Ten years later he penetrated into Ayrshire, and finally made an alliance with the Picts, which enabled him in 756 to conquer Strathclyde and take its capital Alcluyd, or Dumbarton. But at the moment when his triumph seemed complete, his army was utterly destroyed as it withdrew homewards, and so crushing was the calamity that even Eadberht could only fling down his scepter and withdraw with his brother the archbishop to a monastery. From this time the history of Northumbria is only a wild story of lawlessness and bloodshed. King after king was swept away by treason and revolt, the country fell into the hands of its turbulent nobles, the very fields lay waste, and the land was scourged by famine and plague. Isolated from the rest of the country during fifty years of anarchy, the northern realm hardly seemed to form part of the English people.

The work in fact of national consolidation among the English seemed to be fatally arrested. The battle of Burford had finally settled the division of Britain into three equal powers. Wessex was now as firmly planted south of the Thames as Northumbria north of the Humber. But this

crushing defeat was far from having broken the Mercian power; and under Offa, whose reign from 758 to 796 covers with that of Æthelbald nearly the whole of the eighth century, it rose to a height unknown since the days of Wulfhere. Years however had to pass before the new king could set about the recovery of Kent; and it was only after a war of three years that in 775 a victory at Otford gave it back to the Mercian realm. With Kent Offa doubtless recovered Sussex and Surrey, as well as Essex and London; and four years later a victory at Bensington completed the conquest of the district that now forms the shires of Oxford and Buckingham. For the nine years that followed however Mercia ventured on no further attempt to extend her power over her English neighbors. Like her rivals, she turned on the Welsh. Pushing after 779 over the Severn, whose upper course had served till now as the frontier between Briton and Englishman, Offa drove the king of Powys from his capital, which changed its old name of Pengwyrn for the significant English title of the Town in the Scrub or bush, Scrobsbyryg, or Shrewsbury. The border line he drew after his inroad is marked by a huge earthwork which runs from the mouth of Wye to that of Dee, and is still called Offa's Dike. A settlement of Englishmen on the land between this dike and the Severn served as a military frontier for the Mercian realm. Here, as in the later conquests of the Northumbrians and the West-Saxons, the older plan of driving off the conquered from the soil was definitely abandoned. The Welsh who chose to remain dwelt undisturbed among their English conquerors; and it was probably to regulate the mutual relations of the two races that Offa drew up the code of laws which bore his name. In Mercia as in Northumbria attacks on the Britons marked the close of all dreams of supremacy over the English themselves. Under Offa Mercia sank into virtual isolation. The anarchy into which Northumbria sank after Eadberht's death never tempted him to cross the Humber; nor was he shaken from his inaction by as tempting an opportunity which presented itself across the Thames. It must have been in the years that followed the battle of Burford that the West-Saxons made themselves masters of the shrunken realm of Dyvnaint, which still retains its old name in the form of Devon, and pushed

their frontier westward to the Tamar. But in 786 their progress was stayed by a fresh outbreak of anarchy. The strife between the rivals that disputed the throne was ended by the defeat of Ecgberht, the heir of Ceawlin's line, and his flight to Offa's court. The Mercian king however used his presence not so much for schemes of aggrandizement as to bring about a peaceful alliance; and in 789 Ecgberht was driven from Mercia, while Offa wedded his daughter to the West-Saxon king Beorhtric. The true aim of Offa indeed was to unite firmly the whole of Mid-Britain, with Kent as its outlet towards Europe, under the Mercian crown, and to mark its ecclesiastical as well as its political independence by the formation in 787 of an archbishopric of Lichfield, as a check to the See of Canterbury in the south, and a rival to the See of York in the north.

But while Offa was hampered in his projects by the dread of the West-Saxons at home, he was forced to watch jealously a power which had risen to dangerous greatness over sea, the power of the Franks. Till now, the interests of the English people had lain wholly within the bounds of the Britain they had won. But at this moment our national horizon suddenly widened, and the fortunes of England became linked to the general fortunes of Western Christendom. It was by the work of English missionaries that Britain was first drawn into political relations with the Frankish court. The Northumbrian Willibrord, and the more famous West-Saxon Boniface or Winfrith, followed in the track of earlier preachers, both Irish and English, who had been laboring among the heathens of Germany and especially among those who had now become subject to the Franks. The Frank King Pippin's connection with the English preachers led to constant intercourse with England; a Northumbrian scholar, Alcuin, was the center of the literary revival at his court. Pippin's son Charles, known in after-days as Charles the Great, maintained the same interest in English affairs. His friendship with Alcuin drew him into close relations with Northern Britain. Ecgberht, the claimant of the West-Saxon throne, had found a refuge with him since Offa's league with Beorhtric in 787. With Offa too his relations seem to have been generally friendly. But the Mercian king shrank cautiously from any

connection which might imply a recognition of Frankish supremacy. He had indeed good grounds for caution. The costly gifts sent by Charles to the monasteries of England as of Ireland showed his will to obtain an influence in both countries; he maintained relations with Northumbria, with Kent, with the whole English Church. Above all, he harbored at his court exiles from every English realm, exiled kings from Northumbria, East-Anglian thegns, fugitives from Mercia itself; and Ecgberht probably marched in his train when the shouts of the people and priesthood of Rome hailed him as Roman emperor. When the death of Beorhtric in 802 opened a way for the exile's return to Wessex, the relations of Charles with the English were still guided by the dream that Britain, lost to the empire at the hour when the rest of the Western provinces were lost, should return to the empire now that Rome had risen again to more than its old greatness in the West; and the revolutions which were distracting the English kingdoms told steadily in his favor.

The years since Ecgberht's flight had made little change in the state of Britain. Offa's completion of his kingdom by the seizure of East Anglia had been followed by his death in 796; and under his successor Cenwulf, the Mercian archbishopric was suppressed, and there was no attempt to carry further the supremacy of the Midland kingdom. Cenwulf stood silently by when Ecgberht mounted the West-Saxon throne, and maintained peace with the new ruler of Wessex throughout his reign. The first enterprise of Ecgberht indeed was not directed against his English but his Welsh neighbors. In 815 he marched into the heart of Cornwall, and after eight years of fighting, the last fragment of British dominion in the west came to an end. As a nation Britain had passed away with the victories of Deorham and Chester; of the separate British peoples who had still carried on the struggle with the three English kingdoms, the Britons of Cumbria and of Strathclyde had already bowed to Northumbrian rule; the Britons of Wales had owned by tribute to Offa the supremacy of Mercia; the last unconquered British state of West Wales as far as the Land's End now passed under the mastery of Wessex.

While Wessex was regaining the strength it had so long

lost, its rival in Mid-Britain was sinking into hopeless anarchy. Within, Mercia was torn by a civil war which broke out on Cenwulf's death in 821; and the weakness which this left behind was seen when the old strife with Wessex was renewed by his successor Beornwulf, who in 825 penetrated into Wiltshire, and was defeated in a bloody battle at Ellandun. All England south of the Thames at once submitted to Ecgberht of Wessex, and East Anglia rose in a desperate revolt which proved fatal to its Mercian rulers. Two of its kings in succession fell fighting on East Anglian soil; and a third, Wiglaf, had hardly mounted the Mercian throne when his exhausted kingdom was called on again to encounter the West-Saxon. Ecgberht saw that the hour had come for a decisive onset. In 828 his army marched northward without a struggle; Wiglaf fled helplessly before it, and Mercia bowed to the West-Saxon overlordship. From Mercia Ecgberht marched on Northumbria; but half a century of anarchy had robbed that kingdom of all vigor, and pirates were already harrying its coast; its nobles met him at Dore in Derbyshire, and owned him as their overlord. The work that Oswiu and Æthelbald had failed to do was done, and the whole English race in Britain was for the first time knit together under a single ruler. Long and bitter as the struggle for independence was still to be in Mercia and in the north, yet from the moment that Northumbria bowed to its West-Saxon overlord, England was made in fact if not as yet in name.

Section V. — Wessex and the Danes, 802–880

The effort after a national sovereignty had hardly been begun, when the Dane struck down the short-lived greatness of Wessex. While Britain was passing through her ages of conquest and settlement, the dwellers in the Scandinavian peninsula and the isles of the Baltic had lain hidden from Christendom, waging their battle for existence with a stern climate, a barren soil, and stormy seas. Forays and plunder raids over sea eked out their scanty livelihood, and as the eighth century closed, these raids found a wider sphere than the waters of the north. Ecgberht had not yet brought all Britain under his sway when the Vikings or "creek-men,"

as the adventurers were called, were seen hovering off the English coast, and growing in numbers and hardihood as they crept southward to the Thames. The first sight of the Northmen is as if the hand on the dial of history had gone back three hundred years. The Norwegian fiords, the Friesian sand-banks, poured forth pirate fleets such as had swept the seas in the days of Hengest and Cerdic. There was the same wild panic as the black boats of the invaders struck inland along the river-reaches, or moored around the river islets, the same sights of horror, firing of homesteads, slaughter of men, women driven off to slavery or shame, children tossed on pikes or sold in the market-place, as when the English invaders attacked Britain. Christian priests were again slain at the altar by worshipers of Woden; letters, arts, religion, government, disappeared before these Northmen as before the Northmen of old. But when the wild burst of the storm was over, land, people, government, reappeared unchanged. England still remained England; the conquerors sank quietly into the mass of those around them; and Woden yielded without a struggle to Christ. The secret of this difference between the two invasions was that the battle was no longer between men of different races. It was no longer a fight between Briton and German, between Englishman and Welshman. The life of these Northern folk was in the main the life of the earlier Englishmen. Their customs, their religion, their social order, were the same; they were in fact kinsmen bringing back to an England that had forgotten its origins the barbaric England of its pirate forefathers. Nowhere over Europe was the fight so fierce, because nowhere else were the combatants men of one blood and one speech. But just for this reason the fusion of the Northmen with their foes was nowhere so peaceful and so complete.

Britain had to meet a double attack from its new assailants. The Northmen of Norway had struck westward to the Shetlands and Orkneys, and passed thence by the Hebrides to Ireland, while their kinsmen who now dwelt in the old Engle-land steered along the coasts of Friesland and Gaul. Shut in between the two lines of their advance, Britain lay in the very center of their field of operations; and at the close of Ecgberht's reign, when the decisive struggle first began,

their attacks were directed to the two extremities of the West-Saxon realm. After having harried East Anglia and slain in Kent, they swept up the Thames to the plunder of London, while the pirates in the Irish Channel roused all Cornwall to revolt. It was in the alliance of the Northmen with the Britons that the danger of these earlier inroads lay. Ecgberht indeed defeated the united forces of these two enemies in a victory at Hengest-dun, but an unequal struggle was carried on for years to come in the Wessex west of Selwood. King Æthelwulf, who followed Ecgberht in 839, fought strenuously in the defense of his realm; in the defeat of Charmouth, as in the victory at Aclea, he led his troops in person against the sea-robbers; and he drove back the Welsh of North Wales, who were encouraged by the invaders to rise in arms. Northmen and Welshmen were beaten again and again, and yet the peril grew greater year by year. The dangers to the Christian faith from these heathen assailants roused the clergy to his aid. Swithun, Bishop of Winchester, became Æthelwulf's minister; Ealhstan, Bishop of Sherborne, was among the soldiers of the Cross, and with the ealdormen led the fyrds of Somerset and Dorset to drive the invaders from the mouth of the Parret. At last hard fighting gained the realm a little respite; in 858 Æthelwulf died in peace, and for eight years the Northmen left the land in quiet. But these earlier forays had been mere preludes to the real burst of the storm. When it broke in its full force upon the island, it was no longer a series of plunder raids, but the invasion of Britain by a host of conquerors who settled as they conquered. The work was now taken up by another people of Scandinavian blood, the Danes. At the accession of Æthelred, the third of Æthelwulf's sons, who had mounted the throne after the short reigns of his brothers, these new assailants fell on Britain. As they came to the front, the character of the attack wholly changed. The petty squadrons which had till now harassed the coast of Britain made way for larger hosts than had as yet fallen on any country in the west, while raid and foray were replaced by the regular campaign of armies who marched to conquer, and whose aim was to settle on the land they won. In 866 the Danes landed in East Anglia, and marched in the next spring across the Humber upon York.

Civil strife as usual distracted the energies of Northumbria. Its subject crown was disputed by two claimants, and when they united to meet this common danger, both fell in the same defeat before the walls of their capital. Northumbria at once submitted to the Danes, and Mercia was only saved by a hasty march of King Æthelred to its aid. But the peace of Nottingham, by which Æthelred rescued Mercia in 868, left the Danes free to turn to the rich spoil of the great abbeys of the Fen. Peterborough, Crowland, Ely, went up in flames, and their monks fled or were slain among the ruins. From thence they struck suddenly for East Anglia itself, whose king, Eadmund, brought prisoner before the Danish leaders, was bound to a tree and shot to death with arrows. His martyrdom by the heathen made him the St. Sebastian of English legend; in later days his figure gleamed from the pictured windows of church after church along the eastern coast, and the stately abbey of St. Edmundsbury rose over his relics. With Eadmund ended the line of East Anglian under-kings, for his kingdom was not only conquered, but ten years later it was divided among the soldiers of a Danish host, whose leader, Guthrum, assumed its crown. How great was the terror stirred by these successive victories was shown in the action of Mercia, which, though it was as yet still spared from actual conquest, crouched in terror before the Danes, acknowledged them in 870 as its overlords, and paid them tribute.

In four years the work of Ecgberht had been undone, and England north of the Thames had been torn from the overlordship of Wessex. So rapid a conquest as the Danish conquests of Northumbria, Mercia, and East Anglia had only been made possible by the temper of these kingdoms themselves. To them the conquest was simply their transfer from one overlord to another, and it would seem as if they preferred the lordship of the Dane to the overlordship of the West-Saxon. It was another sign of the enormous difficulty of welding these kingdoms together into a single people. The time had now come for Wessex to fight, not for supremacy, but for life. As yet it seemed paralyzed by terror. With the exception of his one march on Nottingham, King Æthelred had done nothing to save his under-kingdoms from the wreck. But the Danes no sooner pushed up the Thames to

Reading than the West-Saxons, attacked on their own soil, turned fiercely at bay. The enemy penetrated indeed into the heart of Wessex as far as the heights that overlook the Vale of White Horse. A desperate battle drove them back from Ashdown; but their camp in the tongue of land between the Kennet and Thames proved impregnable, and fresh forces pushed up the Thames to join their fellows. In the midst of the struggle Æthelred died, and left his youngest brother Ælfred to meet a fresh advance of the foe. They had already encamped at Wilton before the young king could meet them, and a series of defeats forced him to buy the withdrawal of the pirates and win a few years' breathing-space for his realm. It was easy for the quick eye of Ælfred to see that the Danes had withdrawn simply with the view of gaining firmer footing for a new attack; indeed, three years had hardly passed before Mercia was invaded, and its under-king driven over sea to make place for a tributary of the Danes. From Repton half their host marched northwards to the Tyne, dividing a land where there was little left to plunder, colonizing and tilling it, while Guthrum led the rest into East Anglia to prepare for their next year's attack on Wessex. The greatness of the contest had now drawn to Britain the whole strength of the Northmen; and it was with a host swollen by reenforcements from every quarter that Guthrum at last set sail for the south. In 876 the Danish fleet appeared before Wareham, and when a treaty with Ælfred won their withdrawal, they threw themselves into Exeter and allied themselves with the Welsh. Through the winter Ælfred girded himself for this new peril. At break of spring his army closed round the town, while a hired fleet cruised off the coast to guard against rescue. The peril of their brethren in Exeter forced a part of the Danish host which had remained at Wareham to put to sea with the view of aiding them, but they were driven by a storm on the rocks of Swanage, and Exeter was at last starved into surrender, while the Danes again swore to leave Wessex.

They withdrew in fact to Gloucester, but Ælfred had hardly disbanded his troops when his enemies, roused by the arrival of fresh hordes eager for plunder, reappeared at Chippenham, and at the opening of 878 marched ravaging over the land.

The surprise was complete, and for a month or two the general panic left no hope of resistance. Ælfred, with his small band of followers, could only throw himself into a fort raised hastily in the isle of Athelney, among the marshes of the Parret. It was a position from which he could watch closely the movements of his foes, and with the first burst of spring he called the thegns of Somerset to his standard, and still gathering his troops as he moved, marched through Wiltshire on the Danes. He found their host at Edington, defeated it in a great battle, and after a siege of fourteen days forced them to surrender. Their leader, Guthrum, was baptized as a Christian and bound by a solemn peace or "frith" at Wedmore in Somerset. In form the peace of Wedmore seemed indeed a surrender of the bulk of Britain to its invaders. All Northumbria, all East Anglia, the half of Central England, was left subject to the Northmen. Throughout this Danelaw, as it was called, the conquerors settled down among the conquered population as lords of the soil, thickly in the north and east, more thinly in the central districts, but everywhere guarding jealously their old isolation, and gathering in separate "heres" or armies round towns which were only linked in loose confederacies. The peace had in fact saved little more than Wessex itself. But in saving Wessex it saved England. The spell of terror was broken. The tide of invasion was turned. Only one short struggle broke a peace of fifteen years.

With the peace of Wedmore in 878 began a work even more noble than this deliverance of Wessex from the Dane. "So long as I have lived," wrote Ælfred in later days, "I have striven to live worthily." He longed when death overtook him "to leave to the men that come after a remembrance of him in good works." The aim has been more than fulfilled. The memory of the life and doings of the noblest of English rulers has come down to us living and distinct through the midst of exaggeration and legend that gathered round it. Politically or intellectually, the sphere of Ælfred's action may seem too small to justify a comparison of him with the few whom the world claims as its greatest men. What really lifts him to their level is the moral grandeur of his life. He lived solely for the good of his people. He is the first instance in

the history of Christendom of a ruler who put aside every personal aim or ambition to devote himself wholly to the welfare of those whom he ruled. In his mouth "to live worthily" meant a life of justice, temperance, self-sacrifice. The peace of Wedmore at once marked the temper of the man. Warrior and conqueror as he was, with a disorganized England before him, he set aside at thirty the dream of conquest to leave behind him the memory not of victories but of "good works," of daily toils by which he secured peace, good government, education for his people. His policy was one of peace. He abandoned all thought of the recovery of the West-Saxon overlordship. With England across the Watling Street, a Roman road which ran from Chester to London, in other words with Northumbria, East Anglia, and the half of Mercia, Ælfred had nothing to do. All that he retained was his own Wessex, with the upper part of the valley of the Thames, the whole valley of the Severn, and the rich plains of the Mersey and the Dee. Over these latter districts, to which the name of Mercia was now confined, while the rest of the Mercian kingdom became known as the Five Boroughs of the Danes, Ælfred set the Ealdorman Æthelred, the husband of his daughter Æthelflæd, a ruler well fitted by his courage and activity to guard Wessex against inroads from the north. Against invasion from the sea he provided by the better organization of military service, and by the creation of a fleet. The country was divided into military districts, each five hides sending an armed man at the king's summons and providing him with food and pay. The duty of every freeman to join the host remained binding as before; but the host or fyrd was divided into two halves, each of which took by turns its service in the field, while the other half guarded its own burghs and townships. To win the sea was a harder task than to win the land, and Ælfred had not to organize but to create a fleet. He steadily developed however his new naval force, and in the reign of his son a fleet of a hundred English ships held the mastery of the Channel.

The defense of his realm thus provided for, he devoted himself to its good government. In Wessex itself, spent by years of deadly struggle, with law, order, the machinery of justice and government, weakened by the pirate storm, mate-

rial and moral civilization had alike to be revived. His work was of a simple and practical order. In politics as in war, or in his after dealings with letters, he took what was closest at hand and made the best of it. In the reorganization of public justice his main work was to enforce submission to the justice of hundred-mote and shire-mote alike on noble and ceorl, "who were constantly at obstinate variance with one another in the folk-motes, so that hardly any one of them would grant that to be true doom that had been judged for doom by the ealdorman and reeves." "All the law dooms of his land that were given in his absence he used to keenly question, of what sort they were, just or unjust; and if he found any wrong-doing in them he would call the judges themselves before him." "Day and night," says his biographer, "he was busied in the correction of local injustice; for in that whole kingdom the poor had no helpers, or few, save the king himself." Of a new legislation the king had no thought. "Those things which I met with," he tells us, "either of the days of Ine, my kinsman, or of Offa, king of the Mercians, or of Æthelberht, who first among the English race received baptism, those which seemed to me rightest, those I have gathered, and rejected the others." But unpretending as the work might seem, its importance was great. With it began the conception of a national law. The notion of separate systems of tribal customs for the separate peoples passed away; and the codes of Wessex, Mercia, and Kent blended in the doom-book of a common England.

The new strength which had been won for Ælfred's kingdom in six years of peace was shown when the next pirate onset fell on the land. A host from Gaul pushed up the Thames and thence to Rochester, while the Danes of Guthrum's kingdom set aside the peace of Wedmore and gave help to their brethren. The war however was short, and ended in victory so complete on Ælfred's side that in 886 a new peace was made which pushed the West-Saxon frontier forward into the realm of Guthrum, and tore from the Danish hold London and half of the old East-Saxon kingdom. From this moment the Danes were thrown on an attitude of defense, and the change made itself at once felt among the English. The foundation of a new national monarchy was laid. "All

the Angel-cyn turned to Ælfred," says the chronicle, "save those that were under bondage to Danish men." Hardly had this second breathing-space been won than the king turned again to his work of restoration. The spirit of adventure that made him to the last a mighty hunter, the reckless daring of his early manhood, took graver form in an activity that found time amidst the cares of state for the daily duties of religion, for converse with strangers, for study and translation, for learning poems by heart, for planning buildings and instructing craftsmen in gold work, for teaching even falconers and dog keepers their business. But his mind was far from being prisoned within his own island. He listened with keen attention to tales of far-off lands, to the Norwegian Othere's account of his journey round the North Cape to explore the White Sea, and Wulfstan's cruise along the coast of Esthonia; envoys bore his presents to the churches of India and Jerusalem, and an annual mission carried Peter's pence to Rome. Restless as he was, his activity was the activity of a mind strictly practical. Ælfred was preeminently a man of business, careful of detail, laborious and methodical. He carried in his bosom a little handbook in which he jotted down things as they struck him, now a bit of family genealogy, now a prayer, now a story such as that of Bishop Ealdhelm singing sacred songs on the bridge. Each hour of the king's day had its peculiar task; there was the same order in the division of his revenue and in the arrangement of his court. But active and busy as he was, his temper remained simple and kindly. We have few stories of his life that are more than mere legends, but even legend itself never ventured to depart from the outlines of a character which men knew so well. During his months of waiting at Athelney, while the country was overrun by the Danes, he was said to have entered a peasant's hut, and to have been bidden by the housewife, who did not recognize him, to turn the cakes which were baking on the hearth. The young king did as he was bidden, but in the sad thoughts which came over him he forgot his task, and bore in amused silence the scolding of the good wife, who found her cakes spoilt on her return. This tale, if nothing more than a tale, could never have been told of a man without humor. Tradition told of his genial good nature, of

his chattiness over the adventures of his life, and above all of his love for song. In his busiest days Ælfred found time to learn the old songs of his race by heart, and bade them be taught in the palace school. As he translated the tales of the heathen mythology, he lingered fondly over and expanded them, and in moments of gloom he found comfort in the music of the Psalms.

Neither the wars nor the legislation of Ælfred were destined to leave such lasting traces upon England as the impulse he gave to its literature. His end indeed even in this was practical rather than literary. What he aimed at was simply the education of his people. Letters and civilization had almost vanished in Great Britain. In Wessex itself learning had disappeared. "When I began to reign," said Ælfred, "I cannot remember one south of Thames who could explain his service-book in English." The ruin the Danes had wrought had been no mere material ruin. In Northumbria the Danish sword had left but few survivors of the school of Ecgberht or Bæda. To remedy this ignorance Ælfred desired that at least every free-born youth who possessed the means should "abide at his book till he can well understand English writing." He himself superintended a school which he had established for the young nobles of his court. At home he found none to help him in his educational efforts but a few prelates and priests who remained in the fragment of Mercia which had been saved from the invaders, and a Welsh bishop, Asser. "Formerly," the king writes bitterly, "men came hither from foreign lands to seek for instruction, and now when we desire it we can only obtain it from abroad." He sought it among the West-Franks and the East-Franks. A scholar named Grimbald came from St. Omer to preside over the abbey he founded at Winchester; and John the Old-Saxon was fetched, it may be from the Westphalian abbey of Corbey, to rule a monastery that Ælfred's gratitude for his deliverance from the Danes raised in the marshes of Athelney.

The work, however, which most told on English culture was done not by these scholars but by the king himself. Ælfred resolved to throw open to his people in their own tongue the knowledge which had till then been limited to the clergy. He took his books as he found them; they were the

popular manuals of his age; the compilation of Orosius, then the one accessible book of universal history, the history of his own people by Bæda, the "Consolation" of Boethius, the "Pastoral" of Pope Gregory. He translated these works into English; but he was far more than a translator, he was an editor for the people. Here he omitted, there he expanded. He enriched Orosius by a sketch of the new geographical discoveries in the north. He gave a West-Saxon form to his selections from Bæda. In one place he stops to explain his theory of government, his wish for a thicker population, his conception of national welfare as consisting in a due balance of the priest, the soldier, and the churl. The mention of Nero spurs him to an outbreak on the abuses of power. The cold Providence of Boethius gives way to an enthusiastic acknowledgment of the goodness of God. As Ælfred writes, his large-hearted nature flings off its royal mantle, and he talks as a man to men. "Do not blame me," he prays with a charming simplicity, "if any know Latin better than I, for every man must say what he says and do what he does according to his ability." But simple as was his aim, Ælfred created English literature. Before him, England possessed noble poems in the work of Cædmon and his fellow singers, and a train of ballads and battle songs. Prose she had none. The mighty roll of the books that fill her libraries begins with the translations of Ælfred, and above all with the chronicle of his reign. It seems likely that the king's rendering of Bæda's history gave the first impulse towards the compilation of what is known as the English or Anglo-Saxon "Chronicle," which was certainly thrown into its present form during his reign. The meager lists of the kings of Wessex and of the bishops of Winchester, which had been preserved from older times, were roughly expanded into a national history by insertions from Bæda; but it is when it reaches the reign of Ælfred that the "Chronicle" suddenly widens into the vigorous narrative, full of life and originality, that marks the gift of a new power to the English tongue. Varying as it does from age to age in historic value, it remains the first vernacular history of any Teutonic people, the earliest and most venerable monument of Teutonic prose. The writer of English history may be pardoned if he lingers too fondly over

the figure of the king in whose court, at whose impulse, it may be in whose very words, English history begins.

Section VI. — The West-Saxon Realm, 893–1013

Ælfred's work of peace was however to be once more interrupted by a new invasion which in 893 broke under the Danish leader Hasting upon England. After a year's fruitless struggle to force the strong position in which Ælfred covered Wessex, the Danish forces left their fastnesses in the Andredsweald and crossed the Thames, while a rising of the Danelaw in their aid revealed the secret of this movement. Followed by the Londoners, the king's son Eadward and the Mercian Ealdorman Æthelred stormed the Danish camp in Essex, followed the host as it rode along the Thames to rouse new revolts in Wales, caught it on the Severn, and defeating it with a great slaughter, drove it back to its old quarters in Essex. Ælfred himself held Exeter against attack from a pirate fleet and their West-Welsh allies; and when Hasting once more repeated his dash upon the west and occupied Chester, Æthelred drove him from his hold and forced him to fall back to his camp on the Lea. Here Ælfred came to his lieutenant's aid, and the capture of the Danish ships by the two forts with which the king barred the river virtually ended the war. The Danes streamed back from Wales, whither they had retreated, to their old quarters in Frankland, and the new English fleet drove the freebooters from the Channel.

The last years of Ælfred's life seem to have been busied in providing a new defense for his realm by the formation of alliances with states whom a common interest drew together against the pirates. But four years had hardly passed since the victory over Hasting when his death left the kingdom to his son Eadward. Eadward, though a vigorous and active ruler, clung to his father's policy of rest. It was not till 910 that a rising of the Danes on his northern frontier, and an attack of a pirate fleet on the southern coast, forced him to reopen the war. With his sister Æthelflæd, who was in 912 left sole ruler of Mercia by the death of the Ealdorman Æthelred, he undertook the systematic reduction of the

Danelaw. While he bridled East Anglia by the seizure of Southern Essex, and the erection of the forts of Hertford and Witham, the fame of Mercia was safe in the hands of its Lady. Æthelflæd girded her strength for the conquest of the Five Boroughs, the rude Danish confederacy which had taken the place of the eastern half of the older Mercian kingdom. Derby represented the original Mercia on the Upper Trent, Lincoln the Lindiswaras, Leicester the Middle-English, Stamford the province of the Gyrwas,—the marshmen of the Fens,—Nottingham probably that of the Southumbrians. Each of the Five Boroughs seems to have been ruled by its earl with his separate "host"; within each twelve "lawmen" administered Danish law, while a common justice court existed for the whole confederacy. In her attack upon this powerful league Æthelflæd abandoned the older strategy of battle and raid for that of siege and fortress building. Advancing along the line of Trent, she fortified Tamworth and Stafford on its head waters, then turning southward secured the valley of the Avon by a fort at Warwick. With the lines of the great rivers alike secure, and the approaches to Wales on either side of Arden in her hands, she in 917 closed on Derby. The raids of the Danes of Middle-England failed to draw the Lady of Mercia from her prey; and Derby was hardly her own when, turning southward, she forced the surrender of Leicester.

Æthelflæd died in the midst of her triumphs, and Eadward at once annexed Mercia to Wessex. The brilliancy of her exploits had already been matched by his own successes as he closed in on the district of the Five Boroughs from the south. South of the Middle-English and the Fens lay a tract watered by the Ouse and the Nen — originally the district of a tribe known as the South English, and now, like the Five Boroughs of the north, grouped round the towns of Bedford, Huntingdon, and Northampton. The reduction of these was followed by that of East Anglia; the Danes of the Fens submitted with Stamford, the Southumbrians with Nottingham. Lincoln, the last of the Five Boroughs as yet unconquered, no doubt submitted at the same time. From Mid-Britain the king advanced cautiously to an attack on Northumbria. He had already seized Manchester, and was preparing to com-

plete his conquests, when the whole of the north suddenly laid itself at his feet. Not merely Northumbria, but the Scots and the Britons of Strathclyde "chose him to father and lord." The submission had probably been brought about, like that of the North-Welsh to Ælfred, by the pressure of mutual feuds, and it was as valueless as theirs. Within a year after Eadward's death the north was again on fire. Æthelstan, Ælfred's golden-haired grandson, whom the king had girded as a child with a sword set in a golden scabbard and a gem-studded belt, incorporated Northumbria with his dominions; then turning westward broke a league which had been formed between the North-Welsh and the Scots, forced them to pay annual tribute, to march in his armies, and to attend his councils. The West-Welsh of Cornwall were reduced to a like vassalage, and the Britons driven from Exeter, which they had shared till then with its English inhabitants. A league of the Scot king, Constantine, with the Irish Ostmen, was punished by an army which wasted his kingdom, while a fleet ravaged its coasts. But the revolt only heralded the formidable confederacy in which Scotland, Cumberland, and the British and Danish chiefs of the west and east rose at the appearance of the fleet of Olaf in the Humber. The king's victory at Brunanburh, sung in noblest war-song, seemed the wreck of Danish hopes, but the work of conquest was still to be done. On Æthelstan's death and the accession of his young brother Eadmund, the Danelaw rose again in revolt; the men of the Five Boroughs joined their kinsmen in Northumbria, and a peace which was negotiated by the two archbishops, Odo and Wulfstan, practically restored the old balance of Ælfred's day, and reestablished Watling Street as the boundary between Wessex and the Danes. Eadmund, however, possessed the political and military ability of his house. The Danelaw was once more reduced to submission; he seized on an alliance with the Scots as a balance to the Danes, and secured the aid of their king by investing him with the fief of Cumberland. But his triumphs were suddenly cut short by his death. As the king feasted at Pucklechurch, a robber, Leofa, whom he had banished, seated himself at the royal board, and drew his sword on the cupbearer who bade him retire. Eadmund, springing to his thegn's aid,

seized the robber by his hair and flung him to the ground, but Leofa had stabbed the king ere rescue could arrive.

The completion of the West-Saxon realm was in fact reserved for the hands, not of a king or warrior, but of a priest. With the death of Eadmund a new figure comes to the front in English affairs. Dunstan stands first in the line of ecclesiastical statesmen who counted among them Lanfranc and Wolsey, and ended in Laud. He is still more remarkable in himself, in his own vivid personality, after nine centuries of revolution and change. He was born in the little hamlet of Glastonbury, beside Ine's church; his father, Heorstan, was a man of wealth and kinsman of three bishops of the time and of many thegns of the court. It must have been in his father's hall that the fair diminutive boy, with his scant but beautiful hair, caught his love for "the vain songs of ancient heathendom, the trifling legends, the funeral chants," which afterwards roused against him the charge of sorcery. Thence too he may have derived his passionate love of music, and his custom of carrying his harp in hand on journey or visit. The wandering scholars of Ireland left their books in the monastery of Glastonbury, as they left them along the Rhine and the Danube; and Dunstan plunged into the study of sacred and profane letters till his brain broke down in delirium. His knowledge became famous in the neighborhood and reached the court of Æthelstan, but his appearance there was the signal for a burst of ill will among the courtiers, though many of them were kinsmen of his own, and he was forced to withdraw. Even when Eadmund recalled him to the court, his rivals drove him from the king's train, threw him from his horse as he passed through the marshes, and with the wild passion of their age trampled him under foot in the mire. The outrage ended in fever, and in the bitterness of his disappointment and shame Dunstan rose from his sick-bed a monk. But in England at this time the monastic profession seems to have been little more than a vow of celibacy, and his devotion took no ascetic turn. His nature was sunny, versatile, artistic, full of strong affections, and capable of inspiring others with affections as strong. Quick-witted, of tenacious memory, a ready and fluent speaker, gay and genial in address, an artist, a musician, he was at the same time an indefatigable worker, busy at books,

at building, at handicraft. Throughout his life he won the love of women; he now became the spiritual guide of a woman of high rank, who lived only for charity and the entertainment of pilgrims. "He ever clave to her, and loved her in wondrous fashion." His sphere of activity widened as the wealth of his devotee was placed unreservedly at his command; we see him followed by a train of pupils, busy with literature, writing, harping, painting, designing. One morning a lady summons him to her house to design a robe which she is embroidering. As he bends with her maidens over their toil, his harp hung upon the wall sounds without mortal touch tones which the startled ears around frame into a joyous antiphon. The tie which bound him to this scholar life was broken by the death of his patroness; and towards the close of Eadmund's reign Dunstan was again called to the court. But the old jealousies revived, and counting the game lost he prepared again to withdraw. The king had spent the day in the chase; the red deer which he was pursuing dashed over Cheddar cliffs, and his horse only checked itself on the brink of the ravine while Eadmund in the bitterness of death was repenting of his injustice to Dunstan. He was at once summoned on the king's return. "Saddle your horse," said Eadmund, "and ride with me!" The royal train swept over the marshes to Dunstan's home; and greeting him with the kiss of peace, the king seated him in the priestly chair as Abbot of Glastonbury.

From that moment Dunstan may have exercised influence on public affairs; but it was not till the accession of Eadred, Eadmund's brother, that his influence became supreme as leading counselor of the Crown. We may trace his hand in the solemn proclamation of the king's crowning. Eadred's election was the first national election where Briton, Dane, and Englishman were alike represented; his coronation was the first national coronation, the first union of the primate of the north and the primate of the south in setting the crown on the head of one who was to rule from the Forth to the Channel. A revolt of the north two years later was subdued; at the outbreak of a fresh rising the Archbishop of York, Wulfstan, was thrown into prison; and with the submission of the Danelaw in 954 the long work of Ælfred's house was done. Dogged as his fight had been, the Dane at last owned

himself beaten. From the moment of Eadred's final triumph all resistance came to an end. The north was finally brought into the general organization of the English realm, and the Northumbrian under-kingdom sank into an earldom under Oswulf. The new might of the royal power was expressed in the lofty titles assumed by Eadred; he was not only "king of the Anglo-Saxons," but "Cæsar of the whole of Britain."

The death of Eadred however was a signal for the outbreak of political strife. The boy-king Eadwig was swayed by a woman of high lineage, Æthelgifu; and the quarrel between her and the older counselors of Eadred broke into open strife at the coronation feast. On the young king's insolent withdrawal to her chamber Dunstan, at the bidding of the Witan, drew him roughly back to the hall. But before the year was over the wrath of the boy-king drove the abbot over sea, and his whole system went with him. The triumph of Æthelgifu was crowned in 957 by the marriage of her daughter to the king. The marriage was uncanonical, and at the opening of 958 Archbishop Odo parted the king from his wife by solemn sentence; while the Mercians and Northumbrians rose in revolt, proclaimed Eadwig's brother Eadgar their king, and recalled Dunstan, who received successively the Sees of Worcester and of London. The death of Eadwig restored the unity of the realm. Wessex submitted to the king who had been already accepted by the north, and Dunstan, now raised to the See of Canterbury, wielded for sixteen years as the minister of Eadgar the secular and ecclesiastical powers of the realm. Never had England seemed so strong or so peaceful. Without, a fleet cruising round the coast swept the sea of pirates; the Danes of Ireland had turned from foes to friends; eight vassal kings rowed Eadgar (so ran the legend) in his boat on the Dee. The settlement of the north indicated the large and statesman-like course which Dunstan was to pursue in the general administration of the realm. He seems to have adopted from the beginning a national rather than a West-Saxon policy. The later charge against his rule, that he gave too much power to the Dane and too much love to strangers, is the best proof of the unprovincial temper of his administration. He employed

Danes in the royal service and promoted them to high posts in Church and State. In the code which he promulgated he expressly reserved to the north its old Danish rights, "with as good laws as they best might choose." His stern hand restored justice and order, while his care for commerce was shown in the laws which regulated the coinage and the enactments of common weights and measures for the realm. Thanet was ravaged when the wreckers of its coast plundered a trading ship from York. Commerce sprang into a wider life. "Men of the empire," traders of Lower Lorraine and the Rhineland, "men of Rouen," were seen in the streets of London, and it was by the foreign trade which sprang up in Dunstan's time that London rose to the commercial greatness it has held ever since. But the aims of the primate minister reached beyond this outer revival of prosperity and good government. The Danish wars had dealt rudely with Ælfred's hopes; his educational movement had ceased with his death, the clergy had sunk back into worldliness and ignorance, not a single book or translation had been added to those which the king had left. Dunstan resumed the task, if not in the larger spirit of Ælfred, at least in the spirit of a great administrator. The reform of monasticism which had begun in the abbey of Cluny was stirring the zeal of English churchmen, and Eadgar showed himself zealous in the cause of introducing it into England. With his support Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester, carried the new Benedictinism into his diocese, and a few years later Oswald, Bishop of Worcester, brought monks into his own cathedral city. Tradition ascribed to Eadgar the formation of forty monasteries, and it was to his time that English monasticism looked back in later days as the beginning of its continuous life. But after all his efforts monasteries were in fact only firmly planted in Wessex and East Anglia, and the system took no hold in Northumbria or in the bulk of Mercia. Dunstan himself took little part in it, though his influence was strongly felt in the literary revival which accompanied the revival of religious activity. He himself while abbot was famous as a teacher. His great assistant Æthelwold raised Abingdon into a school second only to Glastonbury. His other great helper, Oswald, laid the first foundations of the historic school of Worcester.

Abbo, the most notable scholar in Gaul, came from Fleury at the primate's invitation.

After-times looked back fondly to "Eadgar's law," as it was called, in other words to the English Constitution as it shaped itself in the hands of Eadgar's minister. A number of influences had greatly modified the older order which had followed on the English conquest. Slavery was gradually disappearing before the efforts of the Church. Theodore had denied Christian burial to the kidnaper, and prohibited the sale of children by their parents, after the age of seven. Ecgberht of York punished any sale of child or kinsfolk with excommunication. The murder of a slave by lord or mistress, though no crime in the eye of the State, became a sin for which penance was due to the Church. The slave was exempted from toil on Sundays and holy days; here and there he became attached to the soil and could only be sold with it; sometimes he acquired a plot of ground, and was suffered to purchase his own release. Æthelstan gave the slave class a new rank in the realm by extending to it the same principles of mutual responsibility for crime which were the basis of order among the free. The Church was far from contenting herself with this gradual elevation; Wilfrid led the way in the work of emancipation by freeing two hundred and fifty serfs whom he found attached to his estate at Selsey. Manumission became frequent in wills, as the clergy taught that such a gift was a boon to the soul of the dead. At the Synod of Chelsea the bishops bound themselves to free at their decease all serfs on their estates who had been reduced to serfdom by want or crime. Usually the slave was set free before the altar or in the church porch, and the Gospel book bore written on its margins the record of his emancipation. Sometimes his lord placed him at the spot where four roads met, and bade him go whither he would. In the more solemn form of the law his master took him by the hand in full shire meeting, showed him open road and door, and gave him the lance and sword of the freeman. The slave trade from English ports was prohibited by law, but the prohibition long remained ineffective. A hundred years later than Dunstan the wealth of English nobles was said sometimes to spring from breeding slaves for the market. It was not till

the reign of the first Norman king that the preaching of Wulfstan and the influence of Lanfranc suppressed the trade in its last stronghold, the port of Bristol.

But the decrease of slavery went on side by side with an increasing degradation of the bulk of the people. Political and social changes had long been modifying the whole structure of society; and the very foundations of the old order were broken up in the degradation of the freeman, and the upgrowth of the lord with his dependent villeins. The political changes which were annihilating the older English liberty were in great measure due to a change in the character of English kingship. As the lesser English kingdoms had drawn together, the wider dominion of the king had removed him further and further from his people, and clothed him with a mysterious dignity. Every reign raised him higher in the social scale. The bishop, once ranked his equal in value of life, sank to the level of the ealdorman. The ealdorman himself, once the hereditary ruler of a smaller state, became a mere delegate of the king, with an authority curtailed in every shire by that of the royal reeves — officers despatched to levy the royal revenues and administer the royal justice. Religion deepened the sense of awe. The king, if he was no longer sacred as the son of Woden, was yet more sacred as "the Lord's Anointed"; and treason against him became the worst of crimes. The older nobility of blood died out before the new nobility of the court. From the oldest times of Germanic history each chief or king had his war band, his comrades, warriors bound personally to him by their free choice, sworn to fight for him to the death, and avenge his cause as their own. When Cynewulf of Wessex was foully slain at Merton his comrades "ran at once to the spot, each as he was ready and as fast as he could," and despising all offers of life, fell fighting over the corpse of their lord. The fidelity of the war band was rewarded with grants from the royal domain; the king became their lord or hlaford, "the dispenser of gifts"; the comrade became his "servant" or thegn. Personal service at his court was held not to degrade but to ennoble. "Cup-thegn," and "horse-thegn," and "hordere," or treasurer, became great officers of state. The thegn advanced with the advance of the king. He absorbed every

post of honor; he became ealdorman, reeve, bishop, judge; while his wealth increased as the common folkland passed into the hands of the king, and was carved out by him into estates for his dependents.

The principle of personal allegiance embodied in the new nobility tended to widen into a theory of general dependence. From Ælfred's day it was assumed that no man could exist without a lord. The ravages and the long insecurity of the Danish wars aided to drive the free farmer to seek protection from the thegn. His freehold was surrendered to be received back as a fief, laden with service to its lord. Gradually the "lordless man" became a sort of outlaw in the realm. The free churl sank into the villein, and changed from the freeholder, who knew no superior but God and the law, to the tenant bound to do service to his lord, to follow him to the field, to look to his court for justice, and render days of service in his demesne. While he lost his older freedom he gradually lost, too, his share in the government of the state. The life of the earlier English state was gathered up in its folkmote. There, through its representatives chosen in every hundred-mote, the folk had exercised its own sovereignty in matters of justice as of peace and war; while beside the folkmote, and acting with it, had stood the Witenagemot, the group of "wise men" gathered to give rede to the king and through him to propose a course of action to the folk. The preliminary discussion rested with the nobler sort, the final decision with all. The clash of arms, the "Yea" or "Nay" of the crowd, were its vote. But when by the union of the lesser realms the folk sank into a portion of a wider state, the folkmote sank with it; political supremacy passed to the court of the far-off lord, and the influence of the people on government came to an end. Nobles indeed could still gather round the king; and while the folkmote passes out of political notice, the Witenagemot is heard of more and more as a royal council. It shared in the higher justice, the imposition of taxes, the making of laws, the conclusion of treaties, the control of war, the disposal of public lands, the appointment of great officers of state. There were times when it even claimed to elect or depose the king. But with these powers the bulk of the nobles had really less and less to do. The larger the kingdom

the greater grew the distance from their homes; and their share in the general deliberations of the realm dwindled to nothing. Practically the national council shrank into a gathering of the great officers of Church and State with the royal thegns, and the old English democracy passed into an oligarchy of the closest kind. The only relic of the popular character of English government lay at last in the ring of citizens who at London or Winchester gathered round the wise men and shouted their "Aye" or "Nay" at the election of a king.

It is in the degradation of the class in which its true strength lay that we must look for the cause of the ruin which already hung over the West-Saxon realm. Eadgar was but thirty-two when he died in 975; and the children he left were mere boys. His death opened the way for bitter political strife among the nobles of his court, whose quarrel took the form of a dispute over the succession. Civil war was, in fact, only averted by the energy of the primate; seizing his cross, he settled the question of Eadgar's successor by the coronation of his son Eadward, and confronted his enemies successfully in two assemblies of the wise men. In that of Calne the floor of the room gave way, and according to monkish tradition Dunstan and his friends alone remained unhurt. But not even the fame of a miracle sufficed to turn the tide. The assassination of Eadward was followed by the triumph of Dunstan's opponents, who broke out in "great joy" at the coronation of Eadward's brother Æthelred, a child of ten years old. The government of the realm passed into the hands of the great nobles who upheld Æthelred, and Dunstan withdrew powerless to Canterbury, where he died nine years later.

During the eleven years from 979 to 990, when the young king reached manhood, there is scarcely any internal history to record. New danger however threatened from abroad. The North was girding itself for a fresh onset on England. The Scandinavian peoples had drawn together into their kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway; and it was no longer in isolated bands but in national hosts that they were about to seek conquests in the South. The seas were again thronged with Northern freebooters, and pirate fleets, as of old, appeared on the English coast. In 991 came the first

burst of the storm, when a body of Norwegian Vikings landed, and utterly defeated the host of East Anglia on the field of Maldon. In the next year Æthelred was forced to buy a truce from the invaders, and to suffer them to settle in the land; while he strengthened himself by a treaty of alliance with Normandy, which was now growing into a great power over sea. A fresh attempt to expel the invaders only proved the signal for the gathering of pirate hosts such as England had never seen before, under Swein and Olaf, claimants to the Danish and Norwegian thrones. Their withdrawal in 995 was followed by fresh attacks in 997; danger threatened from Normans and from Ostmen, with Vikings from Man, and Northmen from Cumberland; while the utter weakness of the realm was shown by Æthelred's taking into his service Danish mercenaries, who seem to have been quartered through Wessex as a defense against their brethren. Threatened with a new attack by Swein, who was now king not only of Denmark but, by the defeat and death of Olaf, of Norway itself, Æthelred bound Normandy to his side by a marriage with its duke's sister Emma. But a sudden panic betrayed him into an act of basest treachery, which ruined his plans of defense at home. Urged by secret orders from the king, the West-Saxons rose on St. Brice's day and pitilessly massacred the Danes scattered among them. Gunhild, the sister of their king, Swein, a Christian convert and one of the hostages for the peace, saw husband and child butchered before her eyes ere she fell threatening vengeance on her murderers. Swein swore at the news to wrest England from Æthelred. For four years he marched through the length and breadth of Southern and Eastern England, "lighting his war beacons as he went" in blazing homestead and town. Then for a heavy bribe he withdrew, to prepare for a later and more terrible onset. But there was no rest for the realm. The fiercest of the Norwegian jarls took his place, and from Wessex the war extended over East Anglia and Mercia. Canterbury was taken and sacked, Ælfheah the archbishop dragged to Greenwich, and there in default of ransom brutally slain. The Danes set him in the midst of their husting, pelting him with stones and ox-horns, till one more pitiful than the rest clave his skull with an ax.

But a yet more terrible attack was preparing under Swein in the North, and in 1013 his fleet entered the Humber, and called on the Danelaw to rise in his aid. Northumbria, East Anglia, the Five Boroughs, all England north of Watling Street, submitted to him at Gainsborough. Æthelred shrank into a king of Wessex, and of a Wessex helpless before the foe. Resistance was impossible. The war was terrible but short. Everywhere the country was pitilessly harried, churches plundered, men slaughtered. But with the one exception of London, there was no attempt at defense. Oxford and Winchester flung open their gates. The thegns of Wessex submitted to the Northmen at Bath. Even London was forced at last to give way, and Æthelred fled over sea to a refuge in Normandy. With the flight of the king ended the long struggle of Wessex for supremacy over Britain. The task which had baffled the energies of Eadwine and Offa, and had proved too hard for the valor of Eadward and the statesmanship of Dunstan, the task of uniting England finally into a single nation, was now to pass to other hands.

CHAPTER II

ENGLAND UNDER FOREIGN KINGS — 1013–1204

Section I. — The Danish Kings

BRITAIN had become England in the five hundred years that followed the landing of Hengest, and its conquest had ended in the settlement of its conquerors, in their conversion to Christianity, in the birth of a national literature, of an imperfect civilization, of a rough political order. But through the whole of this earlier age every attempt to fuse the various tribes of conquerors into a single nation had failed. The effort of Northumbria to extend her rule over all England had been foiled by the resistance of Mercia; that of Mercia by the resistance of Wessex. Wessex herself, even under the guidance of great kings and statesmen, had no sooner reduced the country to a seeming unity than local independence rose again at the call of the Danes. The tide of supremacy rolled, in fact, backwards and forwards; now the south won lordship over the north, now the north won lordship over the south. But whatever titles kings might assume, or however imposing their rule might appear, Northumbrian remained apart from West-Saxon, Dane from Englishman. A common national sympathy held the country roughly together, but a real national union had yet to come.

Through the two hundred years that lie between the flight of Æthelred from England to Normandy and that of John from Normandy to England our story is a story of foreign rule. Kings from Denmark were succeeded by kings from Normandy, and these by kings from Anjou. Under Dane, Norman, or Angevin, Englishmen were a subject race, conquered and ruled by foreign masters; and yet it was in these years of subjection that England first became really England. Provincial differences were crushed into national

unity by the pressure of the stranger. The same pressure redressed the wrong which had been done to the fabric of national society by the degradation of the free landowner at the close of the preceding age into a feudal dependent on his lord. The English lords themselves sank into a middle class as they were pushed from their place by the foreign baronage who settled on English soil; and this change was accompanied by a gradual elevation of the class of servile and semiservile cultivators which gradually lifted them into almost complete freedom. The middle class which was thus created was reenforced by the upgrowth of a corresponding class in our towns. Commerce and trade were promoted by the justice and policy of the foreign kings; and with their advance rose the political importance of the trader. The boroughs of England, which at the opening of this period were for the most part mere villages, were rich enough at its close to buy liberty from the Crown. Rights of self-government, of free speech, of common deliberation, which had passed from the people at large into the hands of its nobles, revived in the charters and councils of the towns. A moral revival followed hard on this political development. The occupation of every see and abbacy by strangers who could only speak to their flocks in an unknown tongue had severed the higher clergy from the lower priesthood and the people; but religion became a living thing as it passed to the people themselves, and hermit and friar carried spiritual life home to the heart of the nation at large. At the same time the close connection with the Continent which foreign conquest brought about, secured for England a new communion with the artistic and intellectual life of the world without her. The old mental stagnation was broken up, and art and literature covered England with great buildings and busy schools. Time for this varied progress was gained by the long peace which England owed to the firm government of her kings, while their political ability gave her administrative order, and their judicial reforms built up the fabric of her law. In a word, it is to the stern discipline of these two hundred years that we owe not merely English wealth and English freedom, but England itself.

The first of our foreign masters was the Dane. The

countries of Scandinavia which had so long been the mere starting-points of the pirate bands who had ravaged England and Ireland had now settled down into comparative order. It was the aim of Swein to unite them in a great Scandinavian empire, of which England should be the head; and this project, interrupted for a time by his death, was resumed with yet greater vigor by his son Cnut. Fear of the Dane was still great in the land, and Cnut had no sooner appeared off the English coast than Wessex, Mercia, and Northumberland joined in owning him for their lord, and in discarding again the rule of Æthelred, who had returned on the death of Swein. When Æthelred's death in 1016 raised his son Eadmund Ironside to the throne, the loyalty of London enabled him to struggle bravely for a few months against the Danes; but a decisive victory at Assandun and the death of his rival left Cnut master of the realm. Conqueror as he was, the Dane was no foreigner in the sense that the Norman was a foreigner after him. His language differed little from the English tongue. He brought in no new system of tenure or government. Cnut ruled, in fact, not as a foreign conqueror but as a native king. The goodwill and tranquillity of England were necessary for the success of his larger schemes in the north, where the arms of his English subjects aided him in later years in uniting Denmark and Norway beneath his sway. Dismissing therefore his Danish "host," and retaining only a trained body of household troops or hus-carls to serve in sudden emergencies, Cnut boldly relied for support within his realm on the justice and good government he secured it. His aim during twenty years seems to have been to obliterate from men's minds the foreign character of his rule, and the bloodshed in which it had begun. The change in himself was as startling as the change in his policy. When he first appears in England, it is as the mere Northman, passionate, revengeful, uniting the guile of the savage with his thirst for blood. His first acts of government were a series of murders. Eadric of Mercia, whose aid had given him the crown, was felled by an ax-blow at the king's signal; a murder removed Eadwig, the brother of Eadmund Ironside, while the children of Eadmund were hunted even into Hungary by his ruthless hate.

But from a savage such as this Cnut rose suddenly into a wise and temperate king. Stranger as he was, he fell back on "Eadgar's law," on the old constitution of the realm, and owned no difference between conqueror and conquered, between Dane and Englishman. By the creation of four earldoms, those of Mercia, Northumberland, Wessex, and East Anglia, he recognized provincial independence, but he drew closer than of old the ties which bound the rulers of these great dependencies to the Crown. He even identified himself with the patriotism which had withstood the stranger. The Church had been the center of national resistance to the Dane, but Cnut sought above all its friendship. He paid homage to the cause for which Ælfheah had died, by his translation of the archbishop's body to Canterbury. He atoned for his father's ravages by costly gifts to the religious houses. He protected English pilgrims against the robber lords of the Alps. His love for monks broke out in the song which he composed as he listened to their chant at Ely: "Merrily sang the monks in Ely when Cnut King rowed by" across the vast fen waters that surrounded their abbey. "Row, boatmen, near the land, and hear we these monks sing."

Cnut's letter from Rome to his English subjects marks the grandeur of his character and the noble conception he had formed of kingship. "I have vowed to God to lead a right life in all things," wrote the king, "to rule justly and piously my realms and subjects, and to administer just judgment to all. If heretofore I have done aught beyond what was just, through headiness or negligence of youth, I am ready with God's help to amend it utterly." No royal officer, either for fear of the king or for favor of any, is to consent to injustice, none is to do wrong to rich or poor "as they would value my friendship and their own well-being." He especially denounces unfair exactions: "I have no need that money be heaped together for me by unjust demands." "I have sent this letter before me," Cnut ends, "that all the people of my realm may rejoice in my well-doing; for as you yourselves know, never have I spared nor will I spare to spend myself and my toil in what is needful and good for my people."

Cnut's greatest gift to his people was that of peace. With

him began the long internal tranquillity which was from this time to be the special note of our national history. During two hundred years, with the one terrible interval of the Norman Conquest, and the disturbance under Stephen, England alone among the kingdoms of Europe enjoyed unbroken repose. The wars of her kings lay far from her shores, in France or Normandy, or, as with Cnut, in the more distant lands of the north. The stern justice of their government secured order within. The absence of internal discontent under Cnut, perhaps too the exhaustion of the kingdom after the terrible Danish inroads, is proved by its quiet during his periods of absence. Everything witnesses to the growing wealth and prosperity of the country. A great part of English soil was indeed still utterly uncultivated. Wide reaches of land were covered with wood, thicket, and scrub, or consisted of heaths and moor. In both the east and the west there were vast tracts of marsh-land; fens nearly one hundred miles long severed East Anglia from the midland counties; sites like that of Glastonbury or Athelney were almost inaccessible. The beaver still haunted marshy hollows, such as those which lay about Beverley; the London craftsmen chased the wild boar and the wild ox in the woods of Hampstead, while wolves prowled round the homesteads of the north. But peace and the industry it encouraged were telling on this waste; stag and wolf were retreating before the face of man, the farmer's ax was ringing in the forest, and villages were springing up in the clearings. The growth of commerce was seen in the rich trading-ports of the eastern coast. The main trade lay probably in skins and ropes and ship masts; and above all in the iron and steel that the Scandinavian lands so long supplied to Britain. But Dane and Norwegian were traders over a yet wider field than the northern seas; their barks entered the Mediterranean, while the overland route though Russia brought the wares of Constantinople and the East. "What do you bring to us?" the merchant is asked in an old English dialogue. "I bring skins, silks, costly gems, and gold," he answers, "besides various garments, pigment, wine, oil, and ivory, with brass and copper and tin, silver and gold, and such like." Men from the Rhineland and from Normandy, too, moored their vessels along the

Thames, on whose rude wharves were piled a strange medley of goods: pepper and spices from the far East, crates of gloves and gray cloths, it may be from the Lombard looms, sacks of wool, ironwork from Liège, butts of French wine and vinegar, and with them the rural products of the country itself — cheese, butter, lard, and eggs, with live swine and fowls.

Cnut's one aim was to win the love of his people, and all tradition shows how wonderful was his success. But the greatness of his rule hung solely on the greatness of his temper, and at his death the empire he had built up at once fell to pieces. Denmark and England, parted for a few years by the accession of his son Harald to the throne of the last, were reunited under a second son, Harthacnut; but the love which Cnut's justice had won turned to hatred before the lawlessness of his successors. The long peace sickened men of this fresh outburst of bloodshed and violence. "Never was a bloodier deed done in the land since the Danes came," ran the popular song, when Harald's men seized Ælfred, a brother of Eadmund Ironside, who had returned to England from Normandy. Every tenth man was killed, the rest sold for slaves, and Ælfred himself blinded and left to die at Ely. Harthacnut, more savage even than his predecessor, dug up his brother's body and flung it into a marsh; while a rising at Worcester against his hus-carls was punished by the burning of the town and the pillage of the shire. His death was no less brutal than his life; "he died as he stood at his drink in the house of Osgod Clapa at Lambeth." England wearied of kings like these; but their crimes helped her to free herself from the impossible dream of Cnut. The North, still more barbarous than herself, could give her no new element of progress or civilization. It was the consciousness of this and the hatred of such rulers as Harald and Harthacnut which cooperated with the old feeling of reverence for the past in calling back the line of Ælfred to the throne.

Section II. — The English Restoration, 1042–1066

It is in such transitional moments of a nation's history that it needs the cool prudence, the sensitive selfishness, the quick perception of what is possible, which distinguishes the adroit

politician whom the death of Cnut left supreme in England. Godwine is memorable in our history as the first English statesman who was neither king nor priest. Originally of obscure origin, his ability had raised him high in the royal favor; he was allied to Cnut by marriage, entrusted by him with the earldom of Wessex, and at last made viceroy or justiciar in the government of the realm. In the wars of Scandinavia he had shown courage and skill at the head of a body of English troops who supported Cnut, but his true field of action lay at home. Shrewd, eloquent, an active administrator, Godwine united vigilance, industry, and caution with a singular dexterity in the management of men. During the troubled years that followed the death of Cnut he had done his best to continue his master's policy in securing the internal union of England under a Danish sovereign and in preserving her connection with the North. But at the death of Harthacnut Cnut's policy had become impossible, and abandoning the Danish cause Godwine drifted with the tide of popular feeling which called Eadward, the son of Æthelred, to the throne.

Eadward had lived from his youth in exile at the court of Normandy. A halo of tenderness spread in after-time round this last king of the old English stock; legends told of his pious simplicity, his blitheness and gentleness of mood, the holiness that gained him his name of "Confessor," and enshrined him as a saint in his abbey church at Westminster. Gleemen sang in manlier tones of the long peace and glories of his reign, how warriors and wise counselors stood round his throne, and Welsh and Scot and Briton obeyed him. His was the one figure that stood out bright against the darkness when England lay trodden under foot by Norman conquerors; and so dear became his memory that liberty and independence itself seemed incarnate in his name. Instead of freedom, the subjects of William or Henry called for the "good laws of Eadward the Confessor." But it was as a mere shadow of the past that the exile really returned to the throne of Ælfred; there was something shadow-like in the thin form, the delicate complexion, the transparent womanly hands, that contrasted with the blue eyes and golden hair of his race; and it is almost as a shadow that he glides over the political stage. The work

of government was done by sterner hands. The king's weakness left Godwine master of the realm, and he ruled firmly and wisely. Abandoning with reluctance all interference in Scandinavian politics, he guarded England with a fleet which cruised along the coast. Within, though the earldoms still remained jealously independent, there were signs that a real political unity was being slowly brought about. It was rather within than without that Godwine's work had to be done, and that it was well done was proved by the peace of the land.

Throughout Eadward's earlier reign England lay in the hands of its three earls, Siward of Northumbria, Leofric of Mercia, and Godwine of Wessex, and it seemed as if the old tendency to provincial separation was to triumph with the death of Cnut. What hindered this severance was the ambition of Godwine. His whole mind seemed set on the aggrandizement of his family. He had given his daughter to the king as wife. His own earldom embraced all England south of Thames. His son Harold was earl of East Anglia; his son Swein secured an earldom in the west; and his nephew Beorn was established in Central England. But the first blow to Godwine's power came from the lawlessness of Swein. He seduced the abbess of Leominster, sent her home again with a yet more outrageous demand of her hand in marriage, and on the king's refusal to grant it fled from the realm. Godwine's influence secured his pardon, but on his very return to seek it Swein murdered his cousin Beorn, who had opposed the reconciliation. He again fled to Flanders, and a storm of national indignation followed him over sea. The meeting of the Wise Men branded him as "nithing," the "utterly worthless," yet in a year his father wrested a new pardon from the king and restored him to his earldom. The scandalous inlawing of such a criminal left Godwine alone in a struggle which soon arose with Eadward himself. The king was a stranger in his realm, and his sympathies lay naturally with the home and friends of his youth and exile. He spoke the Norman tongue. He used in Norman fashion a seal for his charters. He set Norman favorites in the highest posts of Church and State. Strangers such as these, though hostile to the minister, were powerless against Godwine's influence and ability, and when at a later time they ventured to stand alone against

him they fell without a blow. But the general ill will at Swein's inlawing enabled them to stir Eadward to attack the earl. A trivial quarrel brought the opportunity. On his return from a visit to the court Eustace, Count of Boulogne, the husband of the king's sister, demanded quarters for his train in Dover. Strife arose, and many both of the burghers and foreigners were slain. All Godwine's better nature withstood Eadward when the king angrily bade him exact vengeance from the town for the affront to his kinsman; and he claimed a fair trial for the townsmen. Eadward looked on his refusal as an outrage, and the quarrel widened into open strife. Godwine at once gathered his forces and marched upon Gloucester, demanding the expulsion of the foreign favorites; but even in a just quarrel the country was cold in his support. The earls of Mercia and Northumberland united their forces to those of Eadward; and in a gathering of the Wise Men at London Swein's outlawry was renewed, while Godwine, declining with his usual prudence a useless struggle, withdrew over sea to Flanders.

But the wrath of the nation was appeased by his fall. Great as were Godwine's faults, he was the one man who now stood between England and the rule of the strangers who flocked to the court; and a year had hardly passed when at the appearance of his fleet in the Thames Eadward was once more forced to yield. The foreign prelates and bishops fled over sea, outlawed by the same meeting of the Wise Men which restored Godwine to his home. He returned only to die, and the direction of affairs passed quietly to his son.

Harold came to power unfettered by the obstacles which had beset his father, and for twelve years he was the actual governor of the realm. The courage, the ability, the genius for administration, the ambition and subtlety of Godwine were found again in his son. In the internal government of England he followed out his father's policy while avoiding its excesses. Peace was preserved, justice administered, and the realm increased in wealth and prosperity. Its gold work and embroidery became famous in the markets of Flanders and France. Disturbances from without were crushed sternly and rapidly; Harold's military talents displayed themselves in a campaign against Wales, and in the boldness and rapidity

with which, arming his troops with weapons adapted for mountain conflict, he penetrated to the heart of its fastnesses and reduced the country to complete submission. But it was a prosperity poor in the nobler elements of national activity, and dead to the more vivid influences of spiritual life. Literature, which on the Continent was kindling into a new activity, died down in England into a few psalters and homilies. The few ministers raised by king or earls contrasted strangely with the religious enthusiasm which was covering Normandy and the Rhineland with stately buildings. The Church sank into lethargy. Stigand, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was the adherent of an antipope, and the highest dignity of the English Church was kept in a state of suspension. No important ecclesiastical synod, no Church reform, broke the slumbers of its clergy. Abroad Europe was waking to a new revival of literature, of art, of religion, but England was all but severed from the Continent. Like Godwine, Harold's energy seemed to devote itself wholly to self-aggrandizement. With the gift of the Northumbrian earldom on Siward's death to Harold's brother Tostig, all England, save a small part of the older Mercia, lay in the hands of the house of Godwine. As the childless Eadward drew to the grave, his minister drew closer and closer to the throne. One obstacle after another was swept from his path. A revolt of the Northumbrians drove Tostig, his most dangerous opponent, to Flanders, and the earl was able to win over the Mercian house of Leofric to his cause by owning Morkere, the brother of the Mercian Earl Eadwine, as Tostig's successor. His aim was in fact attained without a struggle, and the nobles and bishops who were gathered round the death-bed of the Confessor passed quietly at once from it to the election and coronation of Harold.

Section III. — Normandy and the Normans, 912–1066

The quiet of Harold's accession was at once broken by news of danger from a land which, strange as it seemed then, was soon to become almost a part of England itself. A walk through Normandy teaches one more of the age of our history which we are about to traverse than all the books in the

world. The story of the Conquest stands written in the stately vault of the minster at Caen which still covers the tomb of the Conqueror. The name of each hamlet by the roadside has its memories for English ears; a fragment of castle wall marks the home of the Bruce, a tiny little village preserves the name of the Percy. The very look of the country and its people seem familiar to us; the peasant in his cap and blouse recalls the build and features of the small English farmer; the fields about Caen, with their dense hedgerows, their elms, their apple-orchards, are the very picture of an English countryside. On the windy heights around rise the square gray keeps which Normandy handed on to the cliffs of Richmond or the banks of Thames, while huge cathedrals lift themselves over the red-tiled roofs of little market-towns, the models of the stately fabrics which superseded the lowlier churches of Ælfred or Dunstan.

Hrolf the Ganger, or Walker, a Norwegian and a pirate leader like Guthrum or Hasting, had wrested the land on either side the mouth of Seine from the French king, Charles the Simple, at the moment when Ælfred's children were beginning their conquest of the English Danelaw. The treaty in which France purchased peace by this cession of the coast was a close imitation of the peace of Wedmore. Hrolf, like Guthrum, was baptized, received the king's daughter in marriage, and became his vassal for the territory which now took the name of "the Northman's land" or Normandy. But vassalage and the new faith sat alike lightly on the pirate. No such ties of blood and speech tended to unite the Northman with the French among whom he settled along the Seine as united him to the Englishmen among whom he settled along the Humber. William Longsword, the son of Hrolf, though wavering towards France and Christianity, remained a Northman in heart; he called in a Danish colony to occupy his conquest of the Cotentin, the peninsula which runs out from St. Michael's Mount to the cliffs of Cherbourg, and reared his boy among the Northmen of Bayeux, where the Danish tongue and fashions most stubbornly held their own. A heathen reaction followed his death, and the bulk of the Normans, with the child Duke Richard, fell away for the time from Christianity, while new pirate fleets came

swarming up the Seine. To the close of the century the whole people are still "pirates" to the French around them, their land the "pirates' land," their duke the "pirates' duke."

Yet in the end the same forces which merged the Dane in the Englishman told even more powerfully on the Dane in France. No race has ever shown a greater power of absorbing all the nobler characteristics of the peoples with whom they came in contact, or of infusing their own energy into them. During the long reign of Duke Richard the Fearless, the son of William Longsword, heathen Norman pirates became French Christians and feudal at heart. The old Norse language lived only at Bayeux, and in a few local names. As the old Northern freedom died silently away, the descendants of the pirates became feudal nobles, and the "pirates' land" sank into the most loyal of the fiefs of France. The change of manners was accompanied by a change of faith, a change which bound the land where heathendom had fought stubbornly for life to the cause of Christianity and the Church. The dukes were the first to be touched by the new faith, but as the religious movement spread to the people it was welcomed with an almost passionate fanaticism. Every road was crowded with pilgrims. Monasteries rose in every forest glade. Herlouin, a knight of Brionne, sought shelter from the world in a little valley edged in with woods of ash and elm, through which a beck or rivulet (to which his house owed its after-name) runs down to the Risle. He was one day busy building an oven with his own hands when a stranger greeted him with "God save you!" "Are you a Lombard?" asked the knight-abbot, struck with the foreign look of the man. "I am," he replied: and praying to be made a monk, the stranger fell down at the mouth of the oven and kissed Herlouin's feet. The Lombard was Lanfranc of Pavia, a scholar specially skilled in the traditions of the Roman law, who had wandered across the Alps to found a school at Avranches, and was now drawn to a religious life by the fame of Herlouin's sanctity. The religious impulse was a real one, but Lanfranc was destined to be known rather as a great administrator and statesman than as a saint. His teaching raised Bec in a few years into the most famous

school of Christendom: it was in fact the first wave of the intellectual movement which was spreading from Italy to the ruder countries of the West. The whole mental activity of the time seemed concentrated in the group of scholars who gathered round him; the fabric of the canon law and of medieval scholasticism, with the philosophical skepticism which first awoke under its influence, all trace their origin to Bec.

The most famous of these scholars was Anselm of Aosta, an Italian like Lanfranc himself, and who was soon to succeed him as Prior and teacher at Bec. Friends as they were, no two men could be more strangely unlike. Anselm had grown to manhood in the quiet solitude of his mountain valley, a tender-hearted poet dreamer, with a soul pure as the Alpine snows above him, and an intelligence keen and clear as the mountain air. The whole temper of the man was painted in a dream of his youth. It seemed to him as though heaven lay, a stately palace, amid the gleaming hill peaks, while the women reaping in the corn fields of the valley became harvest maidens of its heavenly King. They reaped idly, and Anselm, grieved at their sloth, hastily climbed the mountain side to accuse them to their lord. As he reached the palace the King's voice called him to his feet, and he poured forth his tale; then at the royal bidding bread of an unearthly whiteness was set before him, and he ate and was refreshed. The dream passed with the morning; but the sense of heaven's nearness to earth, the fervid loyalty to the service of his Lord, the tender restfulness and peace in the Divine presence which it reflected, became the life of Anselm. Wandering like other Italian scholars to Normandy, he became a monk under Lanfranc, and on his teacher's removal to higher duties succeeded him in the direction of the abbey of Bec. No teacher has ever thrown a greater spirit of love into his toil. "Force your scholars to improve!" he burst out to another teacher who relied on blows and compulsion. "Did you ever see a craftsman fashion a fair image out of a golden plate by blows alone? Does he not now gently press it and strike it with his tools, now with wise art yet more gently raise and shape it? What do your scholars turn into under this ceaseless beating?" "They

turn only brutal," was the reply. "You have bad luck," was the keen answer, "in a training that only turns men into beasts." The worst natures softened before this tenderness and patience. Even the Conqueror, so harsh and terrible to others, became another man, gracious and easy of speech, with Anselm.

But amidst his absorbing cares as a teacher, the Prior of Bec found time for philosophical speculations, to which we owe the great scientific inquiries which built up the theology of the Middle Ages. His famous works were the first attempts of any Christian thinker to elicit the idea of God from the very nature of the human reason. His passion for abstruse thought robbed him of food and sleep. Sometimes he could hardly pray. Often the night was a long watch till he could seize his conception and write it on the wax tablets which lay beside him. But not even a fever of intense thought such as this could draw Anselm's heart from its passionate tenderness and love. Sick monks in the infirmary could relish no drink save the juice which his hand had squeezed for them from the grape-bunch. In the later days of his archbishopric a hare chased by the hounds took refuge under his horse, and his voice grew loud as he forbade a huntsman to stir in the chase while the creature darted off again to the woods. Even the greed of lands for the Church to which so many religious men yielded found its characteristic rebuke, as the battling lawyers saw Anselm quietly close his eyes in court and go peacefully to sleep.

Section IV. — The Conqueror, 1042–1066

It was not this new fervor of faith only which drove Norman pilgrims in flocks to the shrines of Italy and the Holy Land. The old Northern spirit of adventure turned the pilgrims into crusaders, and the flower of Norman knighthood, impatient of the stern rule of their dukes, followed Roger de Toesny against the Moslem of Spain, or enlisted under the banner of the Greeks in their war with the Arabs who had conquered Sicily. The Normans became conquerors under Robert Guiscard, a knight who had left his home in the Cotentin with a single follower, but whose valor and wisdom

soon placed him at the head of his fellow soldiers in Italy. Attacking the Greeks, whom they had hitherto served, the Norman knights wrested Apulia from them in an overthrow at Cannæ, Guiscard himself led them to the conquest of Calabria and the great trading cities of the coast, while thirty years of warfare gave Sicily to the followers of his brother Roger. The two conquests were united under a line of princes to whose munificence art owes the splendor of Palermo and Monreale, and literature the first outburst of Italian song. Normandy, still seething with vigorous life, was stirred to greed and enterprise by this plunder of the South, and the rumor of Guiscard's exploits roused into more ardent life the daring ambition of its duke.

William the Great, as men of his own day styled him, William the Conqueror, as by one event he stamped himself on our history, was now Duke of Normandy. The full grandeur of his indomitable will, his large and patient statesmanship, the loftiness of aim which lifts him out of the petty incidents of his age, were as yet only partly disclosed. But there never was a moment from his boyhood when he was not among the greatest of men. His life was one long mastering of difficulty after difficulty. The shame of his birth remained in his name of "the Bastard." His father, Duke Robert, had seen Arlotta, the daughter of a tanner of the town, washing her linen in the little brook by Falaise, and loving her had made her the mother of his boy. Robert's departure on a pilgrimage from which he never returned left William a child-ruler among the most turbulent baronage in Christendom, and treason and anarchy surrounded him as he grew to manhood. Disorder broke at last into open revolt. Surprised in his hunting seat at Valognes by the rising of the Bessin and Cotentin districts, in which the pirate temper and lawlessness lingered longest, William had only time to dash through the fords of Vire with the rebels on his track. A fierce combat of horse on the slopes of Val-ès-dunes, to the southeastward of Caen, left him master of the duchy, and the old Scandinavian Normandy yielded forever to the new civilization which streamed in with French alliances and the French tongue. William was himself a type of the transition. In the young duke's character the old world mingled

strangely with the new, the pirate jostled roughly with the statesman. William was the most terrible, as he was the last outcome of the Northern race. The very spirit of the "sea-wolves," who had so long "lived on the pillage of the world," seemed embodied in his gigantic form, his enormous strength, his savage countenance, his desperate bravery, the fury of his wrath, the ruthlessness of his revenge. "No knight under heaven," his enemies confessed, "was William's peer." Boy as he was, horse and man went down before his lance at Valès-dunes. All the fierce gaiety of his nature broke out in the chivalrous adventures of his youth, in his rout of fifteen Angevins with but five soldiers at his back, in his defiant ride over the ground which Geoffry Martel claimed from him, a ride with hawk on fist as though war and the chase were one. No man could bend his bow. His mace crashed its way through a ring of English warriors to the foot of the Standard. He rose to his greatest heights in moments when other men despaired. His voice rang out like a trumpet to rally his soldiers as they fled before the English charge at Senlac. In his winter march on Chester he strode afoot at the head of his fainting troops, and helped with his own hands to clear a road through the snow-drifts. With the Northman's daring broke out the Northman's pitilessness. When the townsmen of Alençon hung rawhides along their walls in scorn of the baseness of his birth, with cries of "Work for the Tanner!" William tore out his prisoners' eyes, cut off their hands and feet, and flung them into the town. At the close of his greatest victory he refused Harold's body a grave. Hundreds of Hampshire men were driven from their homes to make him a hunting-ground, and his harrying of Northumbria left the north of England a desolate waste. There is a grim, ruthless ring about his very jests. In his old age Philip of France mocked at the Conqueror's unwieldy bulk and at the sickness which confined him to his bed at Rouen. "King William has as long a lying-in," laughed his enemy, "as a woman behind her curtains!" "When I get up," swore William, "I will go to mass in Philip's land, and bring a rich offering for my churching. I will offer a thousand candles for my fee. Flaming brands shall they be, and steel shall glitter over the

fire they make." At harvest-tide town and hamlet flaring into ashes along the French border fulfilled the Conqueror's vow. There is the same savage temper in the loneliness of his life. He recked little of men's love or hate. His grim look, his pride, his silence, his wild outbursts of passion, spread terror through his court. "So stark and fierce was he," says the English chronicler, "that none dared resist his will." His graciousness to Anselm only brought out into stronger relief the general harshness of his tone. His very wrath was solitary. "To no man spake he, and no man dared speak to him," when the news reached him of Harold's accession to the throne. It was only when he passed from the palace to the loneliness of the woods that the king's temper unbent. "He loved the wild deer as though he had been their father. Whosoever should slay hart or hind man should blind him." Death itself took its color from the savage solitude of his life. Priests and nobles fled as the last breath left him, and the Conqueror's body lay naked and lonely on the floor.

It was the genius of William which lifted him out of this mere Northman into a great general and a great statesman. The growth of the Norman power was jealously watched by Geoffry Martel, the Count of Anjou, and his influence succeeded in converting France from friend to foe. The danger changed William at once from the chivalrous knight errant of Val-ès-dunes into a wary strategist. As the French army crossed the border he hung cautiously on its flanks, till a division which had encamped in the little town of Mortemer had been surprised and cut to pieces by his soldiers. A second division was still held at bay by the duke himself, when Ralph de Toesny, climbing up into a tree, shouted to them the news of their comrades' fall. "Up, up, Frenchmen! you sleep too long: go bury your friends that lie slain at Mortemer." A second and more formidable invasion four years later was met with the same cautious strategy. William hung on the Frenchmen's flank, looking coolly on while town and abbey were plundered, the Bessin ravaged, Caen sacked, and the invaders prepared to cross the Dive at Varaville and carry fire and sword into the rich land of Lisieux. But only half the army was over the river when the duke fell suddenly

upon its rear. The fight raged till the rising of the tide cut the French forces, as William had foreseen, hopelessly in two. Huddled together on a narrow causeway, swept by the Norman arrows, knights, footmen, and baggage train were involved in the same ruin. Not a man escaped, and the French king, who had been forced to look on helplessly from the opposite bank, fled home to die. The death of Geoffry Martel left William without a rival among the princes of France. Maine, the border-land between Norman and Angevin, and which had for the last ten years been held by Anjou, submitted without a struggle to his rule. Britanny, which had joined the league of his foes, was reduced to submission by a single march.

All this activity abroad was far from distracting the duke's attention from Normandy itself. It was hard to secure peace and order in a land filled with turbulent robber lords. "The Normans must be trodden down and kept under foot," said one of their poets, "for he only who bridles them may use them at his need." William "could never love a robber." His stern protection of trader and peasant roused the baronage through his first ten years to incessant revolt. His very kinsfolk headed the discontent, and summoned the French king to their aid. But the victories of Mortemer and Varaville left the rebels at his mercy. Some rotted in his dungeons, some were driven into exile and joined the conquerors of Apulia and Sicily. The land settled down into peace and order, and William turned to the reform of the Church. Malger, the Archbishop of Rouen, a mere hunting and feasting prelate, was summarily deposed, and his place filled by Maurilius, a French ecclesiastic of piety and learning. Frequent councils under the duke's guidance amended the morals of the clergy. The school of Bec, as we have seen, had become a center of education; and William, with the keen insight into men which formed so marked a feature in his genius, selected its prior as his chief adviser. In a strife with the papacy which the duke had provoked by his marriage with Matilda of Flanders, Lanfranc took the side of Rome, and his opposition had been punished by a sentence of banishment. The prior set out on a lame horse, the only one his house could afford, and was overtaken by the duke, impatient that he should quit Nor-

mandy. "Give me a better horse and I shall go the quicker," replied the imperturbable Lombard, and the duke's wrath passed into laughter and good-will. From that hour Lanfranc became his minister and counselor, whether for affairs in the duchy itself, or for the more daring schemes of ambition which were opened up to him by the position of England.

For half a century the two countries had been drawing nearer together. At the close of the reign of Richard the Fearless the Danish descents upon the English coast had found support in Normandy, and their fleet had wintered in her ports. It was to revenge these attacks that Æthelred had despatched a fleet across the Channel to ravage the Cotentin, but the fleet was repulsed, and the strife appeased by Æthelred's marriage with Emma, a sister of Richard the Good. Æthelred with his children found shelter in Normandy from the Danish kings, and, if Norman accounts are to be trusted, contrary winds alone prevented a Norman fleet from undertaking their restoration. The peaceful recall of Eadward to the throne seemed to open England to Norman ambition, and Godwine was no sooner banished than Duke William appeared at the English court, and received, as he afterwards asserted, a promise of succession to its throne from the king. Such a promise, unconfirmed by the national assembly of the Wise Men, was utterly valueless, and for the moment Godwine's recall put an end to William's hopes. They are said to have been revived by a storm which threw Harold, while cruising in the Channel, on the French coast, and William forced him to swear on the relics of saints to support the duke's claim as the price of his own return to England; but the news of the king's death was at once followed by that of Harold's accession, and after a burst of furious passion the duke prepared to enforce his claim by arms. William did not claim the Crown. He claimed simply the right which he afterwards used when his sword had won it, of presenting himself for election by the nation, and he believed himself entitled so to present himself by the direct commendation of the Confessor. The actual election of Harold which stood in his way, hurried as it was, he did not recognize as valid. But with this constitutional claim was inextricably mingled his resentment at the private wrong which Harold had done him,

and a resolve to exact vengeance on the man whom he regarded as untrue to his oath.

The difficulties in the way of his enterprise were indeed enormous. He could reckon on no support within England itself. At home he had to extort the consent of his own reluctant baronage; to gather a motley host from every quarter of France, and to keep it together for months; to create a fleet, to cut down the very trees, to build, to launch, to man the vessels; and to find time amidst all this for the common business of government, for negotiations with Denmark and the empire, with France, Brittany, and Anjou, with Flanders and with Rome. His rival's difficulties were hardly less than his own. Harold was threatened with invasion not only by William but by his brother Tostig, who had taken refuge in Norway and secured the aid of its king, Harald Hardrada. The fleet and army he had gathered lay watching for months along the coast. His one standing force was his body of hus-carls, but their numbers only enabled them to act as the nucleus of an army. On the other hand the land-fyrd, or general levy of fighting men, was a body easy to raise for any single encounter, but hard to keep together. To assemble such a force was to bring labor to a standstill. The men gathered under the king's standard were the farmers and plowmen of their fields. The ships were the fishing-vessels of the coast. In September the task of holding them together became impossible, but their dispersion had hardly taken place when the two clouds which had so long been gathering burst at once upon the realm. A change of wind released the landlocked armament of William; but before changing, the wind which prisoned the duke had flung the host of Harald Hardrada on the coast of Yorkshire. The king hastened with his household troops to the north, and repulsed the invaders in a decisive overthrow at Stamford Bridge, in the neighborhood of York; but ere he could hurry back to London the Norman host had crossed the sea, and William, who had anchored on the 28th off Pevensey, was ravaging the coast to bring his rival to an engagement. His merciless ravages succeeded, as they were intended, in drawing Harold from London to the south; but the king wisely refused to attack with the forces he had hastily summoned

to his banner. If he was forced to give battle, he resolved to give it on the ground he had himself chosen, and advancing near enough to the coast to check William's ravages, he entrenched himself on a hill known afterwards as that of Senlac, a low spur of the Sussex Downs near Hastings. His position covered London and drove William to concentrate his forces. With a host subsisting by pillage, to concentrate is to starve; and no alternative was left to William but a decisive victory or ruin.

Along the higher ground that leads from Hastings the duke led his men in the dim dawn of an October morning to the mound of Telham. It was from this point that the Normans saw the host of the English gathered thickly behind a rough trench and a stockade on the height of Senlac. Marshy ground covered their right; on the left, the most exposed part of the position, the hus-carls or body-guard of Harold, men in full armor and wielding huge axes, were grouped round the Golden Dragon of Wessex and the Standard of the king. The rest of the ground was covered by thick masses of half-armed rustics who had flocked at Harold's summons to the fight with the stranger. It was against the center of this formidable position that William arrayed his Norman knighthood, while the mercenary forces he had gathered in France and Brittany were ordered to attack its flanks. A general charge of the Norman foot opened the battle; in front rode the minstrel Taillefer, tossing his sword in the air and catching it again while he chanted the song of Roland. He was the first of the host who struck a blow, and he was the first to fall. The charge broke vainly on the stout stockade behind which the English warriors plied ax and javelin with fierce cries of "Out, out," and the repulse of the Normen footmen was followed by a repulse of the Norman horse. Again and again the duke rallied and led them to the fatal stockade. All the fury of fight that glowed in his Norseman's blood, all the headlong valor that had spurred him over the slopes of Val-ès-dunes, mingled that day with the coolness of head, the dogged perseverance, the inexhaustible faculty of resource, which had shone at Mortemer and Varaville. His Breton troops, entangled in the marshy ground on his left, broke in disorder, and as panic spread through the army a cry arose

that the duke was slain. "I live," shouted William, as he tore off his helmet, "and by God's help will conquer yet." Maddened by repulse, the duke spurred right at the Standard; unhorsed, his terrible mace struck down Gyrth, the king's brother; again dismounted, a blow from his hand hurled to the ground an unmannerly rider who would not lend him his steed. Amidst the roar and tumult of the battle he turned the flight he had arrested into the means of victory. Broken as the stockade was by his desperate onset, the shield wall of the warriors behind it still held the Normans at bay till William by a feint of flight drew a part of the English force from their post of vantage. Turning on his disorderly pursuers, the duke cut them to pieces, broke through the abandoned line, and made himself master of the central ground. Meanwhile the French and Bretons made good their ascent on either flank. At three the hill seemed won, at six the fight still raged around the Standard, where Harold's huscarls stood stubbornly at bay on a spot marked afterwards by the high altar of Battle Abbey. An order from the duke at last brought his archers to the front, and their arrow flight told heavily on the dense masses crowded around the king. As the sun went down a shaft pierced Harold's right eye; he fell between the royal ensigns, and the battle closed with a desperate mêlée over his corpse. While night covered the flight of the English, the Conqueror pitched his tent on the very spot where his rival had fallen, and "sate down to eat and drink among the dead."

Securing Romney and Dover, the duke marched by Canterbury upon London. Faction and intrigue were doing his work for him as he advanced. Harold's brothers had fallen with the king on the field of Senlac, and there was none of the house of Godwine to contest the Crown; while of the old royal line there remained but a single boy, Eadgar the Æthel-ing, son of the eldest of Eadmund Ironside's children, who had fled before Cnut's persecution as far as Hungary for shelter. Boy as he was, he was chosen king; but the choice gave little strength to the national cause. The widow of the Confessor surrendered Winchester to the duke. The bishops gathered at London inclined to submission. The citizens themselves faltered as William, passing by their walls,

gave Southwark to the flames. The throne of the boy-king really rested for support on the earls of Mercia and Northumbria, Eadwine and Morkere; and William, crossing the Thames at Wallingford and marching into Hertfordshire, threatened to cut them off from their earldoms. The masterly movement brought about an instant submission. Eadwine and Morkere retreated hastily home from London, and the city gave way at once. Eadgar himself was at the head of the deputation who came to offer the Crown to the Norman duke. "They bowed to him," says the English annalist pathetically, "for need." They bowed to the Norman as they had bowed to the Dane, and William accepted the Crown in the spirit of Cnut. London indeed was secured by the erection of a fortress which afterwards grew into the Tower, but William desired to reign not as a conqueror but as a lawful king. He received the crown at Westminster from the hands of Archbishop Ealdred, amidst shouts of "Yea, yea," from his new English subjects. Fines from the greater landowners atoned for a resistance which was now counted as rebellion; but with this exception every measure of the new sovereign indicated his desire of ruling as a successor of Eadward or Ælfred. As yet indeed the greater part of England remained quietly aloof from him, and he can hardly be said to have been recognized as king by Northumberland or the greater part of Mercia. But to the east of a line which stretched from Norwich to Dorsetshire his rule was unquestioned, and over this portion he ruled as an English king. His soldiers were kept in strict order. No change was made in law or custom. The privileges of London were recognized by a royal writ which still remains, the most venerable of its muniments, among the city's archives. Peace and order were restored. William even attempted, though in vain, to learn the English tongue, that he might personally administer justice to the suitors in his court. The kingdom seemed so tranquil that only a few months had passed after the battle of Senlac when William, leaving England in charge of his brother, Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, and his minister, William Fitz-Osbern, returned for a while to Normandy.

Section V. — The Norman Conquest, 1068–1071

It is not to his victory at Senlac, but to the struggle which followed his return from Normandy, that William owes his title of the Conqueror. During his absence Bishop Odo's tyranny had forced the Kentishmen to seek aid from Count Eustace of Boulogne; while the Welsh princes supported a similar rising against Norman oppression in the west. But as yet the bulk of the land held fairly to the new king. Dover was saved from Eustace; and the discontented fled over sea to seek refuge in lands as far off as Constantinople, where Englishmen from this time formed great part of the body-guard or Varangians of the Eastern emperors. William returned to take his place again as an English king. It was with an English force that he subdued a rising in the south-west led by Exeter, and it was at the head of an English army that he completed his work by marching to the north. His march brought Eadwine and Morkere again into submission; a fresh rising ended in the occupation of York, and England as far as the Tees lay quietly at William's feet.

It was in fact only the national revolt of 1068 that transformed the king into a conqueror. The signal for this revolt came from without. Swein, the king of Denmark, had for two years been preparing to dispute England with the Norman, and on the appearance of his fleet in the Humber all Northern, all Western and Southwestern England rose as one man. Eadgar the Ætheling with a band of exiles who had taken refuge in Scotland took the head of the Northumbrian revolt; in the southwest the men of Devon, Somerset, and Dorset gathered to the sieges of Exeter and Montacute; while a new Norman castle at Shrewsbury alone bridled a rising in the west. So ably had the revolt been planned that even William was taken by surprise. The news of the loss of York and of the slaughter of three thousand Normans who formed its garrison reached him as he was hunting in the Forest of Dean; and in a wild outburst of wrath the king swore "by the splendor of God" to avenge himself on the north. But wrath went hand in hand with the coolest statesmanship. William saw clearly that the center of resistance lay in the Danish fleet, and pushing rapidly to the Humber with a hand-

ful of horsemen, he purchased by a heavy bribe its inactivity and withdrawal. Then leaving York to the last, William turned rapidly westward with the troops which gathered round him, and swept the Welsh border as far as Shrewsbury, while William Fitz-Osbern broke the rising round Exeter. His success set the king free to fulfil his oath of vengeance on the north. After a long delay before the flooded waters of the Aire he entered York, and ravaged the whole country as far as the Tees with fire and sword. Town and village were harried and burnt, their inhabitants slain or driven over the Scotch border. The coast was especially wasted that no hold might remain for any future invasion of the Danes. Harvest, cattle, the very implements of husbandry, were so mercilessly destroyed that the famine which followed is said to have swept off more than a hundred thousand victims, and half a century later the land still lay bare of culture and deserted of men for sixty miles northward of York. The work of vengeance was no sooner over than William led his army back from the Tees to York, and thence to Chester and the west. Never had he shown the grandeur of his character so memorably as in this terrible march. The winter was severe, the roads choked with snow-drifts or broken with torrents; provisions failed, and the army, drenched with rain and forced to consume its horses for food, broke out into open mutiny at the order to advance across the bleak moorlands that part Yorkshire from the west. The mercenaries from Anjou and Brittany demanded their release from service, and William granted their prayer with scorn. On foot, at the head of the troops which remained faithful, the king forced his way by paths inaccessible to horses, often aiding his men with his own hands to clear the road. The last hopes of the English ceased on his arrival at Chester; the king remained undisputed master of the conquered country, and busied himself in the erection of numerous castles which were henceforth to hold it in subjection. Two years passed quietly ere the last act of the conquest was reached. By the withdrawal of the Dane the hopes of England rested wholly on the aid it looked for from Scotland, where Eadgar the Ætheling had taken refuge, and where his sister Margaret had become the wife of King Malcolm. It was probably some assurance of Mal-

colm's aid which roused Eadwine and Morkere to a new revolt, which was at once foiled by the vigilance of the Conqueror. Eadwine fell in an obscure skirmish, while Morkere found refuge for a time in the marshes of the eastern counties, where a desperate band of patriots gathered round an outlawed leader, Hereward. Nowhere had William found so stubborn a resistance; but a causeway two miles long was at last driven across the fens, and the last hopes of English freedom died in the surrender of Ely. Malcolm alone held out till the Conqueror summoned the whole host of the Crown, and crossing the Lowlands and the Forth penetrated into the heart of Scotland. He had reached the Tay when the king's resistance gave way, and Malcolm appeared in the English camp and swore fealty at William's feet.

The struggle which ended in the fens of Ely had wholly changed William's position. He no longer held the land merely as elected king: he added to his elective right the right of conquest. The system of government which he originated was, in fact, the result of the double character of his power. It represented neither the purely feudal system of the Continent nor the system of the older English royalty. More truly perhaps it may be said to have represented both. As the successor of Eadward, William retained the judicial and administrative organization of the older English realm. As the conqueror of England he introduced the military organization of feudalism so far as was necessary for the secure possession of his conquests. The ground was already prepared for such an organization; we have seen the beginnings of English feudalism in the warriors, the "companions" or "thegns" who were personally attached to the king's war band, and received estates from the folkland in reward for their personal services. In later times this feudal distribution of estates had greatly increased, as the bulk of the nobles followed the king's example and bound their tenants to themselves by a similar process of subinfeudation. On the other hand, the pure freeholders, the class which formed the basis of the original English society, had been gradually reduced in number, partly through imitation of the class above them, but still more through the incessant wars and invasions which drove them to seek protectors among the thegns at the cost

of their independence. Feudalism, in fact, was superseding the older freedom in England even before the reign of William, as it had already superseded it in Germany or France. But the tendency was quickened and intensified by the Conquest; the desperate and universal resistance of his English subjects forced William to hold by the sword what the sword had won, and an army strong enough to crush at any moment a national revolt was necessary for the preservation of his throne. Such an army could only be maintained by a vast confiscation of the soil. The failure of the English risings cleared the way for its establishment; the greater part of the higher nobility fell in battle or fled into exile, while the lower thegnhood either forfeited the whole of their lands or redeemed a portion of them by the surrender of the rest. We see the completeness of the confiscation in the vast estates which William was enabled to grant to his more powerful followers. Two hundred manors in Kent, with an equal number elsewhere, rewarded the services of his brother Odo, and grants almost as large fell to William's counselors, Fitz-Osbern and Montgomery, or to barons like the Mowbrays and the Clares. But the poorest soldier of fortune found his part in the spoil. The meanest Norman rose to wealth and power in the new dominion of his lord. Great or small, however, each estate thus granted was granted on condition of its holder's service at the king's call; and when the larger holdings were divided by their owners into smaller subtenancies, the under-tenants were bound by the same conditions of service to their lord. "Hear, my lord," swore the feudal dependent, as kneeling without arms and bareheaded he placed his hands within those of his superior: "I become liegeman of yours for life and limb and earthly regard, and I will keep faith and loyalty to you for life and death, God help me." The kiss of his lord invested him with land or "fief" to descend to him and his heirs forever. A whole army was by this means encamped upon the soil, and William's summons could at any moment gather an overwhelming force around his standard.

Such a force however, effective as it was against the conquered, was hardly less formidable to the Crown itself. William found himself fronted in his new realm by the feudal baronage whom he had so hardly subdued to his will in Nor-

mandy, nobles impatient of law, as jealous of the royal power, and as eager for unbridled military and judicial independence within their own manors here as there. The genius of the Conqueror was shown in his quick discernment of this danger, and in the skill with which he met it. He availed himself of the old legal constitution of the country to hold justice firmly in his own hands. He retained the local courts of the hundred and the shire, where every freeman had a place, while he subjected all to the jurisdiction of the King's Court, which towards the close of the earlier English monarchy had assumed the right of hearing appeals and of calling up cases from any quarter to its bar. The authority of the Crown was maintained by the abolition of the great earldoms which had overshadowed it, those of Wessex, Mercia, and Northumberland, and by the royal nomination of sheriffs for the government of the shires. Large as the estates he granted were, they were scattered over the country in a way which made union between the landowners, or the hereditary attachment of great masses of vassals to a separate lord, equally impossible. In other countries a vassal owed fealty to his lord against all foes, be they king or no. By a usage, however, which William enacted, and which was peculiar to England, each subtenant, in addition to his oath of fealty to his lord, swore fealty directly to the Crown, and loyalty to the king was thus established as the supreme and universal duty of all Englishmen. The feudal obligations, too, the rights and dues owing from each estate to the king, were enforced with remarkable strictness. Each tenant was bound to appear if needful thrice a year at the royal court, to pay a heavy fine or rent on succession to his estate, to contribute an "aid" in money in case of the king's capture in war, or the knighthood of the king's eldest son, or the marriage of his eldest daughter. An heir who was still a minor passed into the Crown's wardship, and all profit from his estate went for the time to the king. If the estate devolved upon an heiress, her hand was at the king's disposal, and was generally sold to the highest bidder. Over the whole face of the land most manors were burthened with their own "customs," or special dues to the Crown: and it was for the purpose of ascertaining and recording these that William sent into each county the commissioners whose

inquiries are preserved in "Domesday Book." A jury impaneled in each hundred declared on oath the extent and nature of each estate, the names, number, condition of its inhabitants, its value before and after the Conquest, and the sums due from it to the Crown.

William found another check on the aggressive spirit of the feudal baronage in his organization of the Church. One of his earliest acts was to summon Lanfranc from Normandy to aid him in its reform; and the deposition of Stigand, which raised Lanfranc to the see of Canterbury, was followed by the removal of most of the English prelates and abbots, and by the appointment of Norman ecclesiastics in their place. The new archbishop did much to restore discipline, and William's own efforts were no doubt partly directed by a real desire for the religious improvement of his realm. "In choosing abbots and bishops," says a contemporary, "he considered not so much men's riches or power as their holiness and wisdom. He called together bishops and abbots and other wise counselors in any vacancy, and by their advice inquired very carefully who was the best and wisest man, as well in divine things as in worldly, to rule the Church of God." But honest as they were, the king's reforms tended directly to the increase of the royal power. The new bishops and abbots were cut off by their foreign origin from the flocks they ruled, while their popular influence was lessened by the removal of ecclesiastical cases from shire or hundred-court, where the bishop had sat side by side with the civil magistrate, to the separate court of the bishop himself. The change was pregnant with future trouble to the Crown; but for the moment it told mainly in removing the bishop from his traditional contact with the popular assembly, and in effacing the memory of the original equality of the religious with the civil power. The dependence of the Church on the royal power was strictly enforced. Homage was exacted from bishop as from baron. No royal tenant could be excommunicated without the king's leave. No synod could legislate without his previous assent and subsequent confirmation of its decrees. No papal letters could be received within the realm save by his permission. William firmly repudiated the claims which were now beginning to be put forward by the court of Rome.

When Gregory VII. called on him to do fealty for his realm, the king sternly refused to admit the claim. "Fealty I have never willed to do, nor do I will to do it now. I have never promised it, nor do I find that my predecessors did it to yours."

But the greatest safeguard of the Crown lay in the wealth and personal power of the kings. Extensive as had been his grants to noble and soldier, William remained the greatest landowner in his realm. His rigid exaction of feudal dues added wealth to the great hoard at Winchester, which had been begun by the spoil of the conquered. But William found a more ready source of revenue in the settlement of the Jewish traders, who followed him from Normandy, and who were enabled by the royal protection to establish themselves in separate quarters or Jewries of the chief towns of England. The Jew had no right of citizenship in the land; the Jewry in which he lived was, like the king's forest, exempt from the common law. He was simply the king's chattel, and his life and goods were absolutely at the king's mercy. But he was too valuable a possession to be lightly thrown away. A royal justiciary secured law to the Jewish merchant, who had no standing-ground in the local courts; his bonds were deposited for safety in a chamber of the royal palace at Westminster; he was protected against the popular hatred in the free exercise of his religion, and allowed to build synagogues and to direct his own ecclesiastical affairs by means of a chief rabbi. That the presence of the Jew was, at least in the earlier years of his settlement, beneficial to the kingdom at large there can be little doubt. His arrival was the arrival of a capitalist; and heavy as was the usury he necessarily exacted in the general insecurity of the time, his loans gave an impulse to industry such as England had never felt before. The century which followed the Conquest witnessed an outburst of architectural energy which covered the land with castles and cathedrals; but castle and cathedral alike owed their existence to the loans of the Jew. His own example gave a new direction to domestic architecture. The buildings which, as at Lincoln and St. Edmundsbury, still retain their title of Jews' Houses were almost the first houses of stone which superseded the mere hovels of the English burghers.

Nor was the influence of the Jews simply industrial. Through their connection with the Jewish schools in Spain and the East they opened a way for the revival of physical science. A Jewish medical school seems to have existed at Oxford; Roger Bacon himself studied under English rabbis. But to the kings the Jew was simply an engine of finance. The wealth which his industry accumulated was wrung from him whenever the Crown had need, and torture and imprisonment were resorted to if milder entreaties failed. It was the gold of the Jew that filled the royal exchequer at the outbreak of war or of revolt. It was in the Hebrew coffers that the Norman kings found strength to hold their baronage at bay.

Section VI. — The English Revival, 1071–1127

The Conquest was hardly over when the struggle between the baronage and the Crown began. The wisdom of William's policy in the destruction of the great earldoms which had overshadowed the throne was shown in an attempt at their restoration made by Roger, the son of his minister William Fitz-Osbern, and by the Breton, Ralf de Guader, whom the king had rewarded for his services at Senlac with the earldom of Norfolk. The rising was quickly suppressed, Roger thrown into prison, and Ralf driven over sea; but the intrigues of the baronage soon found another leader in William's half-brother, the Bishop of Bayeux. Under pretense of aspiring by arms to the papacy, Bishop Odo collected money and men, but the treasure was at once seized by the royal officers, and the bishop arrested in the midst of the court. Even at the king's bidding no officer would venture to seize on a prelate of the Church; it was with his own hands that William was forced to effect his arrest. "I arrest not the bishop, but the Earl of Kent," laughed the Conqueror, and Odo remained a prisoner till William's death. It was in fact this vigorous personality of William which proved the chief safeguard of his throne. "Stark he was," says the English chronicler, "to men that withstood him. Earls that did aught against his bidding he cast into bonds; bishops he stripped of their bishoprics, abbots of their abbacies. He spared not his own brother: first he was in the land, but the king cast him into

bondage. If a man would live and hold his lands, need it were that he followed the king's will." But stern as his rule was, it gave peace to the land. Even amidst the sufferings which necessarily sprang from the circumstances of the Conquest itself, from the erection of castles, or the enclosure of forests, or the exactions which built up the great hoard at Winchester, Englishmen were unable to forget "the good peace he made in the land, so that a man might fare over his realm with a bosom full of gold." Strange touches of a humanity far in advance of his age contrasted with the general temper of his government. One of the strongest traits in his character was his aversion to shed blood by process of law; he formally abolished the punishment of death, and only a single execution stains the annals of his reign. An edict yet more honorable to him put an end to the slave-trade which had till then been carried on at the port of Bristol. The pitiless warrior, the stern and awful king, was a tender and faithful husband, an affectionate father. The lonely silence of his bearing broke into gracious converse with pure and sacred souls like Anselm. If William was "stark" to rebel and baron, men noted that he was "mild to those that loved God."

In power as in renown the Conqueror towered high above his predecessors on the throne. The fear of the Danes, which had so long hung like a thunder-cloud over England, passed away before the host which William gathered to meet a great armament assembled by King Cnut. A mutiny dispersed the Danish fleet, and the murder of its king removed all peril from the north. Scotland, already humbled by William's invasion, was bridled by the erection of a strong fortress at Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and after penetrating with his army to the heart of Wales, the king commenced its systematic reduction by settling barons along its frontier. It was not till his closing years that his unvarying success was disturbed by a rebellion of his son Robert and a quarrel with France; as he rode down the steep street of Mantes, which he had given to the flames, his horse stumbled among the embers, and William, flung heavily against his saddle, was borne home to Rouen to die. The sound of the minster bell woke him at dawn as he lay in the convent of St. Gervais, overlooking the city, — it was the hour of prime, — and stretching out his

hands in prayer the Conqueror passed quietly away. With him passed the terror which had held the baronage in awe, while the severance of his dominions roused their hopes of successful resistance to the stern rule beneath which they had bowed. William bequeathed Normandy to his eldest son Robert; William, his second son, hastened with his father's ring to England, where the influence of Lanfranc at once secured him the Crown. The baronage seized the opportunity to rise in arms under pretext of supporting the claims of Robert, whose weakness of character gave full scope for the growth of feudal independence, and Bishop Odo placed himself at the head of the revolt. The new king was thrown almost wholly on the loyalty of his English subjects. But the national stamp which William had given to his kingship told at once. Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester, the one surviving bishop of English blood, defeated the insurgents in the west; while the king, summoning the freemen of country and town to his host under pain of being branded as "nithing" or worthless, advanced with a large force against Rochester, where the barons were concentrated. A plague which broke out among the garrison forced them to capitulate, and as the prisoners passed through the royal army, cries of "gallows and cord" burst from the English ranks. At a later period of his reign a conspiracy was organized to place Stephen of Albemarle, a near cousin of the royal house, upon the throne; but the capture of Robert Mowbray, the Earl of Northumberland, who had placed himself at its head, and the imprisonment and exile of his fellow conspirators, again crushed the hopes of the baronage.

While the spirit of national patriotism rose to life again in this struggle of the Crown against the baronage, the boldness of a single ecclesiastic revived a national opposition to the mere administrative despotism which now pressed heavily on the land. If William the Red inherited much of his father's energy, as well as his policy towards the conquered English, he inherited none of his moral grandeur. His profligacy and extravagance soon exhausted the royal hoard, and the death of Lanfranc left him free to fill it at the expense of the Church. During the vacancy of a see or abbey its revenues went to the royal treasury, and so steadily did Will-

iam refuse to appoint successors to the prelates whom death removed, that at the close of his reign one archbishopric, four bishoprics, and eleven abbeys were found to be without pastors. The see of Canterbury itself remained vacant till a dangerous illness frightened the king into the promotion of Anselm, who happened at the time to be in England on the business of his house. The Abbot of Bec was dragged to the royal couch and the cross forced into his hands, but William had no sooner recovered from his sickness than he found himself face to face with an opponent whose meek and loving temper rose into firmness and grandeur when it fronted the tyranny of the king. The Conquest, as we have seen, had robbed the Church of all moral power as the representative of the higher national interests against a brutal despotism by placing it in a position of mere dependence on the Crown; and though the struggle between William and the archbishop turned for the most part on points which have no direct bearing on our history, the boldness of Anselm's attitude not only broke the tradition of ecclesiastical servitude, but infused through the nation at large a new spirit of independence. The real character of the contest appears in the primate's answer, when his remonstrances against the lawless exactions from the Church were met by a demand for a present on his own promotion, and his first offer of five hundred pounds was contemptuously refused. "Treat me as a free man," Anselm replied, "and I devote myself and all that I have to your service, but if you treat me as a slave you shall have neither me nor mine." A burst of the Red King's fury drove the archbishop from court, and he finally decided to quit the country; but his example had not been lost, and the close of William's reign found a new spirit of freedom in England with which the greatest of the Conqueror's sons was glad to make terms.

As a soldier the Red King was little inferior to his father. Normandy had been pledged to him by his brother Robert in exchange for a sum which enabled the duke to march in the first crusade for the delivery of the Holy Land, and a rebellion at Le Mans was subdued by the fierce energy with which William flung himself at the news of it into the first boat he found, and crossed the Channel in face of a storm. "Kings

never drown," he replied contemptuously to the remonstrances of his followers. Homage was again wrested from Malcolm by a march to the Firth of Forth, and the subsequent death of that king threw Scotland into a disorder which enabled an army under Eadgar Ætheling to establish Eadgar, the son of Margaret, as an English feudatory on the throne. In Wales William was less triumphant, and the terrible losses inflicted on the heavy Norman cavalry in the fastnesses of Snowdon forced him to fall back on the slower but wiser policy of the Conqueror. Triumph and defeat alike ended in a strange and tragical close; the Red King was found dead by peasants in a glade of the New Forest, with the arrow either of a hunter or an assassin in his breast. Robert was still on his return from the Holy Land, where his bravery had redeemed much of his earlier ill fame, and the English Crown was at once seized by his younger brother Henry, in spite of the opposition of the baronage, who clung to the Duke of Normandy and the union of their estates on both sides the Channel under a single ruler. Their attitude threw Henry, as it had thrown Rufus, on the support of the English, and the two great measures which followed his coronation, his grant of a charter, and his marriage with Matilda, mark the new relation which was thus brought about between the people and their king. Henry's charter is important, not merely as a direct precedent for the Great Charter of John, but as the first limitation which had been imposed on the despotism established by the Conquest. The "evil customs" by which the Red King had enslaved and plundered the Church were explicitly renounced in it, the unlimited demands made by both the Conqueror and his son on the baronage exchanged for customary fees, while the rights of the people itself, though recognized more vaguely, were not forgotten. The barons were held to do justice to their under-tenants and to renounce tyrannical exactions from them, the king promising to restore order and the "law of Eadward," the old constitution of the realm, with the changes which his father had introduced. His marriage gave a significance to these promises which the meanest English peasant could understand. Edith, or Matilda, was the daughter of King Malcolm of Scotland and of Margaret, the sister of Eadgar Ætheling. She had

been brought up in the nunnery of Romsey by its abbess, her aunt Christina, and the veil which she had taken there formed an obstacle to her union with the king which was only removed by the wisdom of Anselm. The archbishop's recall had been one of Henry's first acts after his accession, and Matilda appeared before his court to tell her tale in words of passionate earnestness. She had been veiled in her childhood, she asserted, only to save her from the insults of the rude soldiery who infested the land, had flung the veil from her again and again, and had yielded at last to the unwomanly taunts, the actual blows, of her aunt. "As often as I stood in her presence," the girl pleaded, "I wore the veil, trembling as I wore it with indignation and grief. But as soon as I could get out of her sight I used to snatch it from my head, fling it on the ground, and trample it under foot. That was the way, and none other, in which I was veiled." Anselm at once declared her free from conventual bonds, and the shout of the English multitude when he set the crown on Matilda's brow drowned the murmur of churchman or of baron. The taunts of the Norman nobles, who nicknamed the king and his spouse "Godric and Godgifu," were lost in the joy of the people at large. For the first time since the Conquest an English sovereign sat on the English throne. The blood of Cerdic and Ælfred was to blend itself with that of Hrolf and the Conqueror. Henceforth it was impossible that the two peoples should remain parted from each other; so quick indeed was their union that the very name of Norman had passed away in half a century, and at the accession of Henry's grandson it was impossible to distinguish between the descendants of the conquerors and those of the conquered at Senlac.

We can dimly trace the progress of this blending of the two races together in the case of the burgher population in the towns.

One immediate result of the Conquest had been a great immigration into England from the Continent. A peaceful invasion of the industrial and trading classes of Normandy followed quick on the conquest of the Norman soldiery. Every Norman noble as he quartered himself upon English lands, every Norman abbot as he entered his English cloister, gathered French artists or French domestics around his new

castle or his new church. Around the abbey of Battle, for instance, which William had founded on the site of his great victory, "Gilbert the Foreigner, Gilbert the Weaver, Benet the Steward, Hugh the Secretary, Baldwin the Tailor," mixed with the English tenantry. More especially was this the case with the capital. Long before the landing of William, the Normans had had mercantile establishments in London. Such settlements, however, naturally formed nothing more than a trading colony; but London had no sooner submitted to the Conqueror than "many of the citizens of Rouen and Caen passed over thither, preferring to be dwellers in this city, inasmuch as it was fitter for their trading and better stored with the merchandise in which they were wont to traffic." In some cases, as at Norwich, the French colony isolated itself in a separate French town, side by side with the English borough. But in London it seems to have taken at once the position of a governing class. Gilbert Becket, the father of the famous archbishop, was believed in later days to have been one of the portreeves of London, the predecessors of its mayors; he held in Stephen's time a large property in houses within the walls, and a proof of his civic importance was preserved in the annual visit of each newly elected chief magistrate to his tomb in the little chapel which he had founded in the churchyard of St. Paul's. Yet Gilbert was one of the Norman strangers who followed in the wake of the Conqueror; he was by birth a burgher of Rouen, as his wife was of a burgher family from Caen.

It was partly to this infusion of foreign blood, partly no doubt to the long internal peace and order secured by the Norman rule, that the English towns owed the wealth and importance to which they attained during the reign of Henry the First. In the silent growth and elevation of the English people the boroughs led the way: unnoticed and despised by prelate and noble they had alone preserved or won back again the full tradition of Teutonic liberty. The rights of self-government, of free speech in free meeting, of equal justice by one's equals, were brought safely across the ages of tyranny by the burghers and shopkeepers of the towns. In the quiet, quaintly named streets, in town mead and market-place, in the lord's mill beside the stream, in the bell that

swung out its summons to the crowded borough mote, in merchant gild and church gild and craft gild, lay the life of Englishmen who were doing more than knight and baron to make England what she is, — the life of their home and their trade, of their sturdy battle with oppression, their steady, ceaseless struggle for right and freedom. It is difficult to trace the steps by which borough after borough won its freedom. The bulk of them were situated in the royal demesne, and, like other tenants, their customary rents were collected and justice administered by a royal officer. Amongst our towns London stood chief, and the charter which Henry granted it became the model for the rest. The king yielded the citizens the right of justice: every townsman could claim to be tried by his fellow townsmen in the town court or hustings, whose sessions took place every week. They were subject only to the old English trial by oath, and exempt from the trial by battle which the Normans had introduced. Their trade was protected from toll or exaction over the length and breadth of the land. The king however still nominated in London as elsewhere the portreeve or magistrate of the town, nor were the citizens as yet united together in a commune or corporation; but an imperfect civic organization existed in the "wards" or quarters of the town, each governed by its own alderman, and in the "gilds" or voluntary associations of merchants or traders which insured order and mutual protection for their members. Loose too as these bonds may seem, they were drawn firmly together by the older English traditions of freedom which the towns preserved. In London, for instance, the burgesses gathered in town mote when the bell swung out from St. Paul's, to deliberate freely on their own affairs under the presidency of their aldermen. Here, too, they mustered in arms if danger threatened the city, and delivered the city banner to their captain, the Norman baron Fitz-Walter, to lead them against the enemy. Few boroughs had as yet attained to power such as this, but charter after charter during Henry's reign raised the townsmen of boroughs from mere traders, wholly at the mercy of their lord, into customary tenants, who had purchased their freedom by a fixed rent, regulated their own trade, and enjoyed exemption from all but their own justice.

The advance of towns which had grown up not on the royal domain but around abbey or castle was slower and more difficult. The story of St. Edmundsbury shows how gradual was the transition from pure serfage to an imperfect freedom. Much that had been plowland in the time of the Confessor was covered with houses under the Norman rule. The building of the great abbey church drew its craftsmen and masons to mingle with the plowmen and reapers of the abbot's domain. The troubles of the time helped here as elsewhere the progress of the town; serfs, fugitives from justice or their lord, the trader, the Jew, naturally sought shelter under the strong hand of St. Edmund. But the settlers were wholly at the abbot's mercy. Not a settler but was bound to pay his pence to the abbot's treasury, to plow a rood of his land, to reap in his harvest-field, to fold his sheep in the abbey folds, to help bring the annual catch of eels from the abbey waters. Within the four crosses that bounded the abbot's domain land and water were his; the cattle of the townsmen paid for their pasture on the common; if the fullers refused the loan of their cloth, the cellarer would refuse the use of the stream, and seize their cloths wherever he found them. No toll might be levied from tenants of the abbey farms, and customers had to wait before shop and stall till the buyers of the abbot had had the pick of the market. There was little chance of redress, for if burghers complained in folkmote, it was before the abbot's officers that its meeting was held; if they appealed to the alderman, he was the abbot's nominee, and received the horn, the symbol of his office, at the abbot's hands.

Like all the greater revolutions of society, the advance from this mere serfage was a silent one; indeed its more galling instances of oppression seem to have slipped unconsciously away. Some, like the eel-fishing, were commuted for an easy rent; others, like the slavery of the fullers and the toll of flax, simply disappeared. By usage, by omission, by downright forgetfulness, here by a little struggle, there by a present to a needy abbot, the town won freedom. But progress was not always unconscious, and one incident in the history of St. Edmundsbury is remarkable, not merely as indicating the advance of law, but yet more as marking the part which

a new moral sense of man's right to equal justice was to play in the general advance of the realm. Rude as the borough was, it had preserved its right of meeting in full assembly of the townsmen for government and law. Justice was administered in presence of the burgesses, and the accused acquitted or condemned by the oath of his neighbors. Without the borough bounds however the system of the Norman judicature prevailed; and the rural tenants who did suit and service at the cellarer's court were subject to the decision of the trial by battle. The execution of a farmer named Ketel, who was subject to this feudal jurisdiction, brought the two systems into vivid contrast. He seems to have been guiltless of the crime laid to his charge, but the duel went against him, and he was hanged just without the gates. The taunts of the townsmen woke his fellow farmers to a sense of wrong. "Had Ketel been a dweller within the borough," said the burgesses, "he would have got his acquittal from the oaths of his neighbors, as our liberty is"; and even the monks were moved to a decision that their tenants should enjoy equal liberty and justice with the townsmen. The franchise of the town was extended to the rural possessions of the abbey without it; the farmers "came to the tollhouse, were written in the alderman's roll, and paid the town penny."

The moral revolution which events like this indicate was backed by a religious revival which forms a marked feature in the reign of Henry the First. Pious, learned, and energetic as the bishops of William's appointment had been, they were not Englishmen. Till the reign of Henry the First no Englishman occupied an English see. In language, in manner, in sympathy, the higher clergy were completely severed from the lower priesthood and the people, and the severance went far to paralyze the constitutional influence of the Church. Anselm stood alone against Rufus, and when Anselm was gone no voice of ecclesiastical freedom broke the silence of the reign of Henry the First. But at the close of Henry's reign and throughout that of Stephen, England was stirred by the first of those great religious movements which it was afterwards to experience in the preaching of the friars, the Lollardism of Wyclif, the Reformation, the Puritan enthusiasm, and the mission work of the Wesleys. Everywhere in

town and country men banded themselves together for prayer; hermits flocked to the woods; noble and churl welcomed the austere Cistercians, a reformed outshoot of the Benedictine order, as they spread over the moors and forests of the north. A new spirit of devotion woke the slumber of the religious houses and penetrated alike to the home of the noble Walter de l'Espec at Rievaulx, or of the trader Gilbert Becket in Cheapside. London took its full share in the revival. The city was proud of its religion, its thirteen conventual and more than a hundred parochial churches. The new impulse changed its very aspect. In the midst of the city Bishop Richard busied himself with the vast cathedral church of St. Paul which Bishop Maurice had begun; barges came up the river with stone from Caen for the great arches that moved the popular wonder, while street and lane were being leveled to make space for its famous churchyard. Rahere, the king's minstrel, raised the priory of St. Bartholomew beside Smithfield. Alfune built St. Giles's at Cripplegate. The old English Cnichtenagild surrendered their soke of Aldgate as a site for the new priory of Holy Trinity. The tale of this house paints admirably the temper of the citizens at the time. Its founder, Prior Norman, had built church and cloister and bought books and vestments in so liberal a fashion that at last no money remained to buy bread. The canons were at their last gasp when many of the city folk, looking into the refectory as they paced round the cloister in their usual Sunday procession, saw the tables laid but not a single loaf on them. "Here is a fine set-out," cried the citizens, "but where is the bread to come from?" The women present vowed to bring a loaf every Sunday, and there was soon bread enough and to spare for the priory and its priests. We see the strength of the new movement in the new class of ecclesiastics that it forced on the stage; men like Anselm or John of Salisbury, or the two great prelates who followed one another after Henry's death in the see of Canterbury, Theobald and Thomas, drew whatever influence they wielded from a belief in their holiness of life and unselfishness of aim. The paralysis of the Church ceased as the new impulse bound the prelacy and people together, and its action, when at the end of Henry's reign it started into a power strong enough

to save England from anarchy, has been felt in our history ever since.

From this revival of English feeling Henry himself stood jealously aloof; but the enthusiasm which his marriage had excited enabled him to defy the claims of his brother and the disaffection of his nobles. Robert landed at Portsmouth to find himself face to face with an English army which Anselm's summons had gathered round the king; and his retreat left Henry free to deal sternly with the rebel barons. Robert of Belesme, the son of Roger of Montgomery, was now their chief; but 60,000 English footmen followed the king through the rough passes which led to Shrewsbury, and an early surrender alone saved Robert's life. Master of his own realm, and enriched by the confiscated lands of the revolted baronage, Henry crossed into Normandy, where the misgovernment of Robert had alienated the clergy and trades, and where the outrages of the Norman nobles forced the more peaceful classes to call the king to their aid. On the field of Tenchebray his forces met those of the duke, and a decisive English victory on Norman soil avenged the shame of Hastings. The conquered duchy became a dependency of the English crown, and Henry's energies were frittered away through a quarter of a century in crushing its revolts, the hostility of the French, and the efforts of his nephew, William the son of Robert, to regain the crown which his father had lost at Tenchebray. In England, however, all was peace. The vigorous administration of Henry the First completed in fullest detail the system of government which the Conqueror had sketched. The vast estates which had fallen to the Crown through revolt and forfeiture were granted out to new men dependent on royal favor. On the ruins of the great feudatories whom he had crushed the king built up a class of lesser nobles, whom the older barons of the Conquest looked down on in scorn, but who formed a counterbalancing force and furnished a class of useful administrators whom Henry employed as his sheriffs and judges. A new organization of justice and finance bound the kingdom together under the royal administration. The clerks of the Royal Chapel were formed into a body of secretaries or royal ministers, whose head bore the title of Chancellor. Above them stood the

Justiciar or lieutenant-general of the kingdom, who in the frequent absence of the king acted as regent, and whose staff, selected from the barons connected with the royal household, were formed into a supreme court of the realm. The King's Court, as this was called, permanently represented the whole court of royal vassals, which had hitherto been summoned thrice in the year. As the royal council, it revised and registered laws, and its "counsel and consent," though merely formal, preserved the principle of the older popular legislation. As a court of justice it formed the highest court of appeal: it could call up any suit from a lower tribunal on the application of a suitor, while the union of several sheriffdoms under some of its members connected it closely with the local courts. As a financial body, its chief work lay in the assessment and collection of the revenue. In this capacity it took the name of the Court of Exchequer from the checkered table, much like a chess-board, at which it sat, and on which accounts were rendered. In their financial capacity its justices became "Barons of the Exchequer." Twice every year the sheriff of each county appeared before these barons and rendered the sum of the fixed rent from royal domains, the Danegeld or land tax, the fines of the local courts, the feudal aids from the baronial estates, which formed the chief part of the royal revenue. Local disputes respecting these payments or the assessment of the town-rents were settled by a detachment of barons from the court, who made the circuit of the shires, and whose fiscal visitations led to the judicial visitations, the "judges' circuits," which still form so marked a feature in our legal system.

From this work of internal reform Henry's attention was called suddenly by one terrible loss to the question of the succession to the throne. His son William, "the Ætheling," as the English fondly styled the child of their own Matilda, had with a crowd of nobles accompanied the king on his return from Normandy; but the white ship in which he had embarked lingered behind the rest of the royal fleet, while the young nobles, excited with wine, hung over the ship's side and chased away with taunts the priest who came to give the customary benediction. At last the guards of the king's treasure pressed the vessel's departure, and, driven by the arms of fifty

rowers, it swept swiftly out to sea. All at once the ship's side struck on a rock at the mouth of the harbor, and in an instant it sank beneath the waves. One terrible cry, ringing through the stillness of the night, was heard by the royal fleet; but it was not till the morning that the fatal news reached the king. He fell unconscious to the ground, and rose never to smile again. Henry had no other son, and the whole circle of his foreign foes closed round him the more fiercely that the son of Robert was now his natural heir. The king hated William, while he loved Matilda, the daughter who still remained to him, who had been married to the Emperor Henry the Fifth, and whose husband's death now restored her to her father. He recognized her as his heir, though the succession of a woman seemed strange to the feudal baronage; nobles and priests were forced to swear allegiance to her as their future mistress, and Henry affianced her to the son of the one foe he really feared, Count Fulk of Anjou.

Section VII. — England and Anjou, 870–1154

To understand the history of England under its Angevin rulers, we must first know something of the Angevins themselves. The character and the policy of Henry the Second and his sons were as much a heritage of their race as the broad lands of Anjou. The fortunes of England were being slowly wrought out in every incident of the history of the counts, as the descendants of a Breton woodman became masters not of Anjou only, but of Touraine, Maine, and Poitou, of Gascony and Auvergne, of Aquitaine and Normandy, and sovereigns at last of the great realm which Normandy had won. The legend of the father of their race carries us back to the times of our own Ælfred, when the Danes were ravaging along Loire as they ravaged along Thames. In the heart of the Breton border, in the debatable land between France and Brittany, dwelt Tortulf the Forester, half-brigand, half-hunter, as the gloomy days went, living in free outlaw fashion in the woods about Rennes. Tortulf had learned in his rough forest school "how to strike the foe, to sleep on the bare ground, to bear hunger and toil, summer's heat and winter's frost, how to fear nothing save ill fame." Following King

Charles the Bald in his struggle with the Danes, the woodman won broad lands along the Loire, and his son Ingelger, who had swept the Northmen from Touraine and the land to the west, which they had burned and wasted into a vast solitude, became the first Count of Anjou. But the tale of Tortulf and Ingelger is a mere creation of some twelfth-century *jongleur*, and the earliest count whom history recognizes is Fulk the Red. Fulk attached himself to the dukes of France, who were now drawing nearer to the throne, and received from them in guerdon the county of Anjou. The story of his son is a story of peace, breaking like a quiet idyl the war storms of his house. Alone of his race Fulk the Good waged no wars: his delight was to sit in the choir of Tours and to be called Canon. One Martinmas eve Fulk was singing there in clerkly guise when the king, Lewis d'Outremer, entered the church. "He sings like a priest," laughed the king, as his nobles pointed mockingly to the figure of the Count Canon; but Fulk was ready with his reply. "Know, my lord," wrote the Count of Anjou, "that a king unlearned is a crowned ass." Fulk was in fact no priest, but a busy ruler, governing, enforcing peace, and carrying justice to every corner of the wasted land. To him alone of his race men gave the title of "the Good."

Himself in character little more than a bold dashing soldier, Fulk's son, Geoffry Grey-gown, sank almost into a vassal of his powerful neighbors, the counts of Blois and Champagne. The vassalage was roughly shaken off by his successor. Fulk Nerra, Fulk the Black, is the greatest of the Angevins, the first in whom we can trace that marked type of character which their house was to preserve with a fatal constancy through two hundred years. He was without natural affection. In his youth he burnt a wife at the stake, and legend told how he led her to her doom decked out in his gayest attire. In his old age he waged his bitterest war against his son, and exacted from him when vanquished a humiliation which men reserved for the deadliest of their foes. "You are conquered, you are conquered!" shouted the old man in fierce exultation, as Geoffry, bridled and saddled like a beast of burden, crawled for pardon to his father's feet. In Fulk first appeared the low type of superstition which startled even

superstitious ages in the early Plantagenets. Robber as he was of Church lands, and contemptuous of ecclesiastical censures, the fear of the judgment drove Fulk to the Holy Sepulcher. Barefoot and with the strokes of the scourge falling heavily on his shoulders, the count had himself dragged by a halter through the streets of Jerusalem, and courted the doom of martyrdom by his wild outcries of penitence. He rewarded the fidelity of Herbert of Le Mans, whose aid saved him from utter ruin, by entrapping him into captivity and robbing him of his lands. He secured the terrified friendship of the French king by despatching twelve assassins to cut down before his eyes the minister who had troubled it. Familiar as the age was with treason and rapine and blood, it recoiled from the cool cynicism of his crimes, and believed the wrath of Heaven to have been revealed against the union of the worst forms of evil in Fulk the Black. But neither the wrath of Heaven nor the curses of men broke with a single mishap the fifty years of his success.

At his accession Anjou was the least important of the greater provinces of France. At his death in 1040 it stood, if not in extent, at least in real power, first among them all. Cool-headed, clear-sighted, quick to resolve, quicker to strike, Fulk's career was one long series of victories over all his rivals. He was a consummate general, and he had the gift of personal bravery, which was denied to some of his greatest descendants. There was a moment in the first of his battles when the day seemed lost for Anjou; a feigned retreat of the Bretons had drawn the Angevin horsemen into a line of hidden pitfalls, and the count himself was flung heavily to the ground. Dragged from the medley of men and horses, he swept down almost singly on the foe "as a storm-wind" (so rang the pæan of the Angevins) "sweeps down on the thick corn rows," and the field was won. To these qualities of the warrior he added a power of political organization, a capacity for far-reaching combinations, a faculty of statesmanship, which became the heritage of the Angevins and lifted them as high above the intellectual level of the rulers of their time as their shameless wickedness degraded them below the level of man. His overthrow of Brittany on the field of Conquereux was followed by the gradual absorption

of Southern Touraine, while his restless activity covered the land with castles and abbeys. The very spirit of the Black Count seems still to frown from the dark tower of Durtal on the sunny valley of the Loire. A victory at Pontlevoi crushed the rival house of Blois; the seizure of Saumur completed his conquests in the south, while Northern Touraine was won bit by bit till only Tours resisted the Angevin. The treacherous seizure of its count, Herbert Wake-dog, left Maine at his mercy ere the old man bequeathed his unfinished work to his son. As a warrior Geoffry Martel was hardly inferior to his father. A decisive victory left Poitou at his mercy, a second wrested Tours from the Count of Blois; and the seizure of Le Mans brought him to the Norman border. Here, however, his advance was checked by the genius of William the Conqueror, and with his death the greatness of Anjou seemed for the time to have come to an end.

Stripped of Maine by the Normans, and weakened by internal dissensions, the weak administration of the next count, Fulk Rechin, left Anjou powerless against its rivals. It woke to fresh energy with the accession of his son, Fulk of Jerusalem. Now urging the turbulent Norman nobles to revolt, now supporting Robert's son William against his uncle, offering himself throughout as the loyal supporter of France, which was now hemmed in on all sides by the forces of the English king and of his allies the counts of Blois and Champagne, Fulk was the one enemy whom Henry the First really feared. It was to disarm his restless hostility that the king gave to his son, Geoffry the Handsome, the hand of his daughter Matilda. No marriage could have been more unpopular, and the secrecy with which it was effected was held by the barons as freeing them from the oath which they had sworn; for no baron, if he was without sons, could give a husband to his daughter save by his lord's consent, and by a strained analogy the nobles contended that their own assent was necessary to the marriage of Matilda. A more pressing danger lay in the greed of her husband Geoffry, who, from his habit of wearing the common broom of Anjou (the *planta genista*) in his helmet, had acquired, in addition to his surname of "the Handsome," the more famous title of "Plan-

tagenet." His claims ended at last in intrigues with the Norman nobles, and Henry hurried to the border to meet an expected invasion; but the plot broke down at his presence, the Angevins retired, and the old man withdrew to the Forest of Lions to die.

"God give him," wrote the Archbishop of Rouen from Henry's death-bed, "the peace he loved." With him indeed closed the long peace of the Norman rule. An outburst of anarchy followed on the news of his departure, and in the midst of the turmoil Earl Stephen, his nephew, appeared at the gates of London. Stephen was a son of the Conqueror's daughter, Adela, who had married a Count of Blois; he had been brought up at the English court, and his claim as nearest male heir, save his brother, of the Conqueror's blood (for his cousin, the son of Robert, had fallen in Flanders) was supported by his personal popularity. Mere swordsman as he was, his good humor, his generosity, his very prodigality, made him a favorite with all. No noble, however, had as yet ventured to join him, nor had any town opened its gates when London poured out to meet him with uproarious welcome. Neither barons nor prelates were present to constitute a National Council, but the great city did not hesitate to take their place. The voice of her citizens had long been accepted as representative of the popular assent in the election of a king; but it marks the progress of English independence under Henry that London now claimed of itself the right of election. Undismayed by the absence of the hereditary counselors of the Crown, its "aldermen and wise folk gathered together the folkmote, and these providing at their own will for the good of the realm, unanimously resolved to choose a king." The solemn deliberation ended in the choice of Stephen; the citizens swore to defend the king with money and blood, Stephen swore to apply his whole strength to the pacification and good government of the realm.

If London was true to her oath, Stephen was false to his. The nineteen years of his reign are years of a misrule and disorder unknown in our history. Stephen had been acknowledged even by the partisans of Matilda, but his weakness and prodigality soon gave room to feudal revolt. In 1138 a rising of the barons, planned by Earl Robert of

Gloucester, in Southern and Western England, was aided by the king of the Scots, who poured his forces over the northern border. Stephen himself marched on the western rebels, and left them few strongholds save Bristol. The pillage and cruelties of the wild tribes of Galloway and the Highlands roused the spirit of the north; baron and freeman gathered at York round Archbishop Thurstan, and marched to the field of Northallerton to await the foe. The sacred banners of St. Cuthbert of Durham, St. Peter of York, St. John of Beverley, and St. Wilfrid of Ripon hung from a pole fixed in a four-wheeled car which stood in the center of the host. "I who wear no armor," shouted the chief of the Galwegians, "will go as far this day as any one with breastplate of mail"; his men charged with wild shouts of "Albin, Albin," and were followed by the Norman knighthood of the Lowlands. The rout, however, was complete; the fierce hordes dashed in vain against the close English ranks around the Standard, and the whole army fled in confusion to Carlisle.

But Stephen had few kingly qualities save that of a soldier's bravery, and the realm soon began to slip from his grasp. Released from the stern hand of Henry, the barons fortified their castles, and their example was necessarily followed, in self-defense, by the great prelates and nobles who had acted as ministers to the late king. Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, the justiciar, and his son Roger the chancellor, were carried away by the panic. They fortified their castles, and appeared at court followed by a strong force at their back. The weak violence of the king's temper suddenly broke out. He seized Roger, with his son the chancellor, and his nephew the Bishop of Lincoln, at Oxford, and forced them to surrender their strongholds. Shame broke the justiciar's heart; he died at the close of the year, and his nephew Nigel of Ely, the treasurer, was driven from the realm. The fall of Roger's house shattered the whole system of government. The king's violence, while it cost him the support of the clergy, opened the way for Matilda's landing in England; and the country was soon divided between the adherents of the two rivals, the west supporting Matilda, London and the east Stephen. A defeat at Lincoln left the latter a captive in the hands of his enemies, while Matilda was received

throughout the land as its "Lady." But the disdain with which she repulsed the claim of London to the enjoyment of its older privileges called its burghers to arms, and her resolve to hold Stephen a prisoner roused his party again to life. Flying to Oxford, she was besieged there by Stephen, who had obtained his release; but she escaped in white robes by a postern, and crossing the river unobserved on the ice made her way to Abingdon. Six years later she returned to Normandy. The war had in fact become a mere chaos of pillage and bloodshed. The outrages of the feudal baronage showed from what horrors the rule of the Norman kings had saved England. No more ghastly picture of a nation's misery has ever been painted than that which closes the English "Chronicle," whose last accents falter out amidst the horrors of the time. "They hanged up men by their feet and smoked them with foul smoke. Some were hanged up by their thumbs, others by the head, and burning things were hung on to their feet. They put knotted strings about men's heads, and writhed them till they went into the brain. They put men into prisons where adders and snakes and toads were crawling, and so they tormented them. Some they put into a chest short and narrow and not deep, and that had sharp stones within, and forced men therein so that they broke all their limbs. In many of the castles were hateful and grim things called rachenteges, which two or three men had enough to do to carry. It was thus made: it was fastened to a beam and had a sharp iron to go about a man's neck and throat, so that he might noway sit, or lie, or sleep, but he bore all the iron. Many thousands they starved with hunger."

England was rescued from this feudal anarchy by the efforts of the Church. In the early part of Stephen's reign his brother Henry, the Bishop of Winchester, acting as papal legate for the realm, had striven to supply the absence of any royal or national authority by convening synods of bishops, and by asserting the moral right of the Church to declare sovereigns unworthy of the throne. The compact between king and people which became a part of constitutional law in the charter of Henry had gathered new force in the charter of Stephen, but its legitimate consequence in

the responsibility of the Crown for the execution of the compact was first drawn out by these ecclesiastical councils. From their alternate depositions of Stephen and Matilda flowed the after depositions of Edward and Richard, and the solemn act by which the succession was changed in the case of James. Extravagant and unauthorized as their expression of it may appear, they expressed the right of a nation to good government. Henry of Winchester, however, "half-monk, half-soldier," as he was called, possessed too little religious influence to wield a really spiritual power; it was only at the close of Stephen's reign that the nation really found a moral leader in Theobald, the Archbishop of Canterbury. "To the Church," Thomas justly said afterwards, with the proud consciousness of having been Theobald's right hand, "Henry owed his Crown and England her deliverance." Thomas was the son of Gilbert Becket, the portreeve of London, the site of whose house is still marked by the Mercers' chapel in Cheapside. His mother Rohese was a type of the devout woman of her day; she weighed her boy each year on his birthday against money, clothes, and provisions which she gave to the poor. Thomas grew up amidst the Norman barons and clerks who frequented his father's house, with a genial freedom of character tempered by the Norman refinement; he passed from the school of Merton to the University of Paris, and returned to fling himself into the life of the young nobles of the time. Tall, handsome, bright-eyed, ready of wit and speech, his firmness of temper showed itself in his very sports; to rescue his hawk which had fallen into the water he once plunged into a millrace, and was all but crushed by the wheel. The loss of his father's wealth drove him to the court of Archbishop Theobald, and he soon became the primate's confidant in his plans for the rescue of England. Henry, the son of Matilda and Geoffry, had now by the death of his father become master of Normandy and Anjou, while by his marriage with its duchess, Eleanor of Poitou, he had added Aquitaine to his dominions. Thomas, as Theobald's agent, invited Henry to appear in England, and on the duke's landing the archbishop interposed between the rival claimants to the Crown. The treaty of Wallingford abolished the evils of the long anarchy; the castles were to

be razed, the Crown lands resumed, the foreign mercenaries banished from the country. Stephen was recognized as king, and in turn acknowledged Henry as his heir. But a year had hardly passed when Stephen's death gave his rival the Crown.

Section VIII. — Henry the Second, 1154–1189

Young as he was, Henry mounted the throne with a resolute purpose of government which his reign carried steadily out. His practical, serviceable frame suited the hardest worker of his time. There was something in his build and look, in the square stout frame, the fiery face, the close-cropped hair, the prominent eyes, the bull neck, the coarse strong hands, the bowed legs, that marked out the keen, stirring, coarse-fibered man of business. "He never sits down," said one who observed him closely; "he is always on his legs from morning till night." Orderly in business, careless in appearance, sparing in diet, never resting or giving his servants rest, chatty, inquisitive, endowed with a singular charm of address and strength of memory, obstinate in love or hatred, a fair scholar, a great hunter, his general air that of a rough, passionate, busy man, Henry's personal character told directly on the character of his reign. His accession marks the period of amalgamation, when neighborhood and traffic and intermarriage drew Englishmen and Normans rapidly into a single people. A national feeling was thus springing up before which the barriers of the older feudalism were to be swept away. Henry had even less reverence for the feudal past than the men of his day; he was indeed utterly without the imagination and reverence which enable men to sympathize with any past at all. He had a practical man's impatience of the obstacles thrown in the way of his reforms by the older constitution of the realm, nor could he understand other men's reluctance to purchase undoubted improvements by the sacrifice of customs and traditions of bygone days. Without any theoretical hostility to the coordinate powers of the State, it seemed to him a perfectly reasonable and natural course to trample either baronage or Church under foot to gain his end of good government. He

saw clearly that the remedy for such anarchy as England had endured under Stephen lay in the establishment of a kingly government unembarrassed by any privileges of order or class, administered by royal servants, and in whose public administration the nobles acted simply as delegates of the sovereign. His work was to lie in the organization of judicial and administrative reforms which realized this idea. But of the great currents of thought and feeling which were tending in the same direction he knew nothing. What he did for the moral and social impulses which were telling on men about him was simply to let them alone. Religion grew more and more identified with patriotism under the eyes of a king who whispered, and scribbled, and looked at picture-books during mass, who never confessed, and cursed God in wild frenzies of blasphemy. Great peoples formed themselves on both sides of the sea round a sovereign who bent the whole force of his mind to hold together an empire which the growth of nationality must inevitably destroy. There is throughout a tragic grandeur in the irony of Henry's position, that of a Sforza of the fifteenth century set in the midst of the twelfth, building up by patience and policy and craft a dominion alien to the deepest sympathies of his age, and fated to be swept away in the end by popular forces, to whose existence his very cleverness and activity blinded him. But indirectly and unconsciously his policy did more than that of all his predecessors to prepare England for the unity and freedom which the fall of his house was to reveal.

He had been placed on the throne, as we have seen, by the Church. His first work was to repair the evils which England had endured till his accession by the restoration of the system of Henry the First; and it was with the aid and counsel of Theobald that the foreign marauders were driven from the realm, the castles demolished in spite of the opposition of the baronage, the King's Court and Exchequer restored. Age and infirmity, however, warned the primate to retire from the post of minister, and his power fell into the younger and more vigorous hands of Thomas Becket, who had long acted as his confidential adviser and was now made chancellor. Thomas won the personal favor of the king.

The two young men had, in Theobald's words, "but one heart and mind"; Henry jested in the chancellor's hall, or tore his cloak from his shoulders in rough horse play as they rode through the streets. He loaded his favorite with riches and honors, but there is no ground for thinking that Thomas in any degree influenced his system of rule. Henry's policy seems for good or evil to have been throughout his own. His work of reorganization went steadily on amidst troubles at home and abroad. Welsh outbreaks forced him in 1157 to lead an army across the border. The next year saw him drawn across the Channel, where he was already master of a third of the present France. He had inherited Anjou, Maine, and Touraine from his father, Normandy from his mother; and the seven provinces of the south, Poitou, Saintonge, the Angoumois, La Marche, the Limousin, Périgord, and Gascony belonged to his wife. As Duchess of Aquitaine Eleanor had claims on Toulouse, and these Henry prepared in 1159 to enforce by arms. He was, however, luckless in the war. King Louis of France threw himself into Toulouse. Conscious of the ill-compacted nature of his wide dominions, Henry shrank from an open contest with his suzerain; he withdrew his forces, and the quarrel ended in 1160 by a formal alliance and the betrothal of his eldest son to the daughter of Louis. Thomas had fought bravely throughout the campaign, at the head of the 700 knights who formed his household. But the king had other work for him than war. On Theobald's death he at once forced on the monks of Canterbury, and on Thomas himself, his election as archbishop. His purpose in this appointment was soon revealed. Henry proposed to the bishops that a clerk convicted of a crime should be deprived of his orders, and handed over to the king's tribunals. The local courts of the feudal baronage had been roughly shorn of their power by the judicial reforms of Henry the First; and the Church courts, as the Conqueror had created them, with their exclusive right of justice over the clerical order, in other words over the whole body of educated men throughout the realm, formed the one great exception to the system which was concentrating all jurisdiction in the hands of the king. The bishops yielded, but opposition came from the very prelate whom Henry had

created to enforce his will. From the moment of his appointment Thomas had flung himself with the whole energy of his nature into the part he had to play. At the first intimation of Henry's purpose he had pointed with a laugh to his gay attire — "You are choosing a fine dress to figure at the head of your Canterbury monks"; but once monk and primate, he passed with a fevered earnestness from luxury to asceticism. Even as minister he had opposed the king's designs, and foretold their future opposition: "You will soon hate me as much as you love me now," he said, "for you assume an authority in the affairs of the Church to which I shall never assent." A prudent man might have doubted the wisdom of destroying the only shelter which protected piety or learning against a despot like the Red King, and in the mind of Thomas the ecclesiastical immunities were parts of the sacred heritage of the Church. He stood without support: the pope advised concession, the bishops forsook him, and Thomas bent at last to agree to the constitutions drawn up at the Council of Clarendon. The king had appealed to the ancient "customs" of the realm, and it was to state these "customs" that a court was held at Clarendon near Salisbury. The report presented by bishops and barons formed the "Constitutions of Clarendon," a code which in the bulk of its provisions simply reenacted the system of the Conqueror. Every election of bishop or abbot was to take place before royal officers, in the king's chapel, and with the king's assent. The prelate elect was bound to do homage to the king for his lands before consecration, and to hold his lands as a barony from the king, subject to all feudal burdens of taxation and attendance in the king's court. No bishop might leave the realm without the royal permission. No tenant in chief or royal servant might be excommunicated, or their land placed under interdict, but by the king's assent. What was new was the legislation respecting ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The king's court was to decide whether a suit between clerk and layman, whose nature was disputed, belonged to the Church courts or the king's. A royal officer was to be present at all ecclesiastical proceedings, in order to confine the bishop's court within its own due limits, and a clerk once convicted there passed at once under the civil jurisdiction. An appeal

was left from the archbishop's court to the king's court for defect of justice, but none might appeal to the papal court save with the king's consent. The privilege of sanctuary in churches or churchyards was repealed, so far as property and not persons was concerned. After a passionate refusal the primate at last gave his assent to the constitutions; but this assent was soon retracted, and the king's savage resentment threw the moral advantage of the position into the archbishop's hands. Vexatious charges were brought against him; in the Council of Northampton a few months later his life was said to be in danger, and all urged him to submit. But in the presence of danger the courage of the man rose to its full height. Grasping his archiepiscopal cross he entered the royal court, forbade the nobles to condemn him, and appealed to the papal see. Shouts of "Traitor! traitor!" followed him as he retired. The primate turned fiercely at the word: "Were I a knight," he retorted, "my sword should answer that foul taunt!" At nightfall he fled in disguise and reached France through Flanders. For six years the contest raged bitterly; at Rome, at Paris, the agents of the two powers intrigued against each other. Henry stooped to acts of the meanest persecution in driving the primate's kinsmen from England, and in threats to confiscate the lands of the Cistercians that he might force the monks of Pontigny to refuse Thomas a home; while Becket himself exhausted the patience of his friends by his violence and excommunications, as well as by the stubbornness with which he clung to the offensive clause, "Saving the honor of my order," the addition of which would have practically neutralized the king's reforms. The pope counseled mildness, the French king for a time withdrew his support, his own clerks gave way at last. "Come up," said one of them bitterly when his horse stumbled on the road, "saving the honor of the Church and my order." But neither warning nor desertion moved the resolution of the primate. Henry, in dread of papal excommunication, resolved at last on the coronation of his son, in defiance of the privileges of Canterbury, by the Archbishop of York. But the pope's hands were now freed by his successes in Italy, and his threat of an interdict forced the king to a show of submission. The archbishop

was allowed to return after a reconciliation with Henry at Fréteval, and the Kentishmen flocked around him with uproarious welcome as he entered Canterbury. "This is England," said his clerks, as they saw the white headlands of the coast. "You will wish yourself elsewhere before fifty days are gone," said Thomas sadly, and his foreboding showed his appreciation of Henry's character. He was now in the royal power, and orders had already been issued in the younger Henry's name for his arrest, when four knights from the king's court, spurred to outrage by a passionate outburst of their master's wrath, crossed the sea and forced their way into the archbishop's palace. After a stormy parley with him in his chamber they withdrew to arm. Thomas was hurried by his clerks into the cathedral, but as he reached the steps leading from the transept to the choir, his pursuers burst in from the cloisters. "Where," cried Reginald Fitzurse in the dusk of the dimly lighted minster, "where is the traitor, Thomas Becket?" The primate turned resolutely back: "Here am I, no traitor, but a priest of God," he replied, and again descending the steps he placed himself with his back against a pillar and fronted his foes. All the bravery, the violence of his old knightly life, seemed to revive in Thomas as he tossed back the threats and demands of his assailants. "You are our prisoner," shouted Fitzurse, and the four knights seized him to drag him from the church. "Do not touch me, Reginald," shouted the primate, "pander that you are, you owe me fealty"; and availing himself of his personal strength he shook him roughly off. "Strike, strike," retorted Fitzurse, and blow after blow struck Thomas to the ground. A retainer of Ranulf de Broc with the point of his sword scattered the primate's brains on the ground. "Let us be off," he cried triumphantly, "this traitor will never rise again."

The brutal murder was received with a thrill of horror throughout Christendom; miracles were wrought at the martyr's tomb; he was canonized, and became the most popular of English saints; but Henry's show of submission to the papacy averted the excommunication which at first threatened to avenge the deed of blood. The judicial provisions of the Constitutions of Clarendon were in form annulled, and liberty

of election was restored to bishoprics and abbacies. In reality, however, the victory rested with the king. Throughout his reign ecclesiastical appointments were practically in his hands, while the King's Court asserted its power over the spiritual jurisdiction of the bishops. The close of the struggle left Henry free to complete his great work of legal reform. He had already availed himself of the expedition against Toulouse to deliver a blow at the baronage by allowing the lower tenants to commute their personal service in the field for a money payment under the name of "scutage," or shield money. The king thus became master of resources which enabled him to dispense with the military support of his tenants, and to maintain a force of mercenary soldiers in their place. The diminution of the military power of the nobles was accompanied by measures which robbed them of their legal jurisdiction. The circuits of the judges were restored, and instructions were given them to enter the manors of the barons and make inquiry into their privileges; while the office of sheriff was withdrawn from the great nobles of the shire and entrusted to the lawyers and courtiers who already furnished the staff of justices. The resentment of the barons found an opportunity of displaying itself when the king's eldest son, whose coronation had given him the title of king, demanded to be put in possession of his English realm, and on his father's refusal took refuge with Louis of France. France, Flanders, and Scotland joined the league against Henry; his younger sons, Richard and Geoffry, took up arms in Aquitaine. In England a descent of Flemish mercenaries under the Earl of Leicester was repulsed by the loyal justiciars near St. Edmundsbury; but Louis had no sooner entered Normandy and invested Rouen than the whole extent of the danger was revealed. The Scots crossed the border, Roger Mowbray rose in revolt in Yorkshire, Ferrars, Earl of Derby, in the midland shires, Hugh Bigod in the eastern counties, while a Flemish fleet prepared to support the insurrection by a descent upon the coast. The murder of Archbishop Thomas still hung around Henry's neck, and his first act in hurrying to England to meet these perils was to prostrate himself before the shrine of the new martyr, and to submit to a public scourging in expiation of his sin. But

the penance was hardly wrought when all danger was dispelled by a series of triumphs. The king of Scotland, William the Lion, surprised by the English under cover of a mist, fell into the hands of his minister, Ranulf de Glanvill, and at the retreat of the Scots the English rebels hastened to lay down their arms. With the army of mercenaries which he had brought over sea Henry was able to return to Normandy, to raise the siege of Rouen, and to reduce his sons to submission. The revolt of the baronage was followed by fresh blows at their power. A further step was taken a few years later in the military organization of the realm by the Assize of Arms, which restored the national militia to the place which it had lost at the Conquest. The substitution of scutage for military service had freed the Crown from its dependence on the baronage and its feudal retainers; the Assize of Arms replaced this feudal organization by the older obligation of every freeman to serve in the defense of the realm. Every knight was bound to appear at the king's call in coat of mail and with shield and lance, every freeholder with lance and hauberk, every burgess and poorer freeman with lance and helmet. The levy of an armed nation was thus placed wholly at the disposal of the king for purposes of defense.

The measures we have named were only part of Henry's legislation. His reign, it has been truly said, "initiated the the rule of law" as distinct from the despotism, whether personal or tempered by routine, of the Norman kings. It was in successive "assizes" or codes issued with the sanction of great councils of barons and prelates, that he perfected by a system of reforms the administrative measures which Henry the First had begun. The fabric of our judicial legislation commences with the Assize of Clarendon, the first object of which was to provide for the order of the realm by reviving the old English system of mutual security or frank-pledge. No stranger might abide in any place save a borough, and there but for a single night, unless sureties were given for his good behavior; and the list of such strangers was to be submitted to the itinerant justices. In the provisions of this assize for the repression of crime we find the origin of trial by jury, so often attributed to earlier times. Twelve lawful

men of each hundred, with four from each township, were sworn to present those who were known or reputed as criminals within their district for trial by ordeal. The jurors were thus not merely witnesses, but sworn to act as judges also in determining the value of the charge, and it is this double character of Henry's jurors that has descended to our "grand jury," who still remain charged with the duty of presenting criminals for trial after examination of the witnesses against them. Two later steps brought the jury to its modern condition. Under Edward the First witnesses acquainted with the particular fact in question were added in each case to the general jury, and by the separation of these two classes of jurors at a later time the last became simply "witnesses" without any judicial power, while the first ceased to be witnesses at all, and became our modern jurors, who are only judges of the testimony given. With this assize, too, the practise which had prevailed from the earliest English times of "compurgation" passed away. Under this system the accused could be acquitted of the charge by the voluntary oath of his neighbors and kinsmen; but this was abolished by the Assize of Clarendon, and for the next fifty years his trial, after the investigation of the grand jury, was found solely in the ordeal or "judgment of God," where innocence was proved by the power of holding hot iron in the hand, or by sinking when flung into the water, for swimming was a proof of guilt. It was the abolition of the whole system of ordeal by the Council of Lateran which led the way to the establishment of what is called a "petty jury" for the final trial of prisoners. The Assize of Clarendon was expanded in that of Northampton, which was drawn up immediately after the rebellion of the barons. Henry, as we have seen, had restored the King's Court and the occasional circuits of its justices: by the Assize of Northampton he rendered this institution permanent and regular by dividing the kingdom into six districts, to each of which he assigned three itinerant justices. The circuits thus defined correspond roughly with those that still exist. The primary object of these circuits was financial, but the rendering of the king's justice went on side by side with the exaction of the king's dues, and this carrying of justice to every corner of the realm was made still more effective by

the abolition of all feudal exemptions from the royal jurisdiction. The chief danger of the new system lay in the opportunities it afforded to judical corruption; and so great were its abuses that Henry was soon forced to restrict for a time the number of justices to five, and to reserve appeals from their court to himself in council. The Court of Appeal which he thus created, that of the king in council, gave birth as time went on to tribunal after tribunal. It is from it that the judicial powers now exercised by the Privy Council are derived, as well as the equitable jurisdiction of the chancellor. In the next century it becomes the Great Council of the realm, from which the Privy Council drew its legislative and the House of Lords its judicial character. The Court of Star Chamber and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council are later offshoots of Henry's Court of Appeal. The King's Court, which became inferior to this higher jurisdiction, was divided after the Great Charter into the three distinct courts of the King's Bench, the Exchequer, and the Common Pleas, which by the time of Edward the First received distinct judges, and became for all purposes separate.

For the ten years which followed the revolt of the barons Henry's power was at its height; and an invasion, which we shall tell hereafter, had annexed Ireland to his English Crown. But the course of triumph and legislative reform was rudely broken by the quarrels and revolts of his sons. The successive deaths of Henry and Geoffry were followed by intrigues between Richard, now his father's heir, who had been entrusted with Aquitaine, and Philip, who had succeeded Louis on the throne of France. The plot broke out at last in actual conflict; Richard did homage to Philip, and their allied forces suddenly appeared before Le Mans, from which Henry was driven in headlong flight towards Normandy. From a height where he halted to look back on the burning city, so dear to him as his birthplace, the king hurled his curse against God: "Since Thou hast taken from me the town I loved best, where I was born and bred, and where my father lies buried, I will have my revenge on Thee too — I will rob Thee of that thing Thou lovest most in me." Death was upon him, and the longing of a dying man drew him to the home of his race, but Tours fell as he lay at Saumur, and

the hunted king was driven to beg mercy from his foes. They gave him the list of the conspirators against him: at the head of them was his youngest and best loved son, John. "Now," he said, as he turned his face to the wall, "let things go as they will — I care no more for myself or for the world." He was borne to Chinon by the silvery waters of Vienne, and muttering, "Shame, shame on a conquered king," passed sullenly away.

Section IX. — The Fall of the Angevins, 1189–1204

We need not follow Richard in the crusade which occupied the beginning of his reign, and which left England for four years without a ruler, — in his quarrels in Sicily, his conquest of Cyprus, his victory at Jaffa, his fruitless march upon Jerusalem, the truce he concluded with Saladin, his shipwreck as he returned, or his two imprisonments in Germany. Freed at last from his captivity, he returned to face new perils. During his absence, the kingdom had been entrusted to William of Longchamp, Bishop of Ely, head of Church and State, as at once justiciar and papal legate. Longchamp was loyal to the king, but his exactions and scorn of Englishmen roused a fierce hatred among the baronage, and this hatred found a head in John, traitor to his brother as to his father. John's intrigues with the baronage and the French king ended at last in open revolt, which was, however, checked by the ability of the new primate, Hubert Walter; and Richard's landing in 1194 was followed by his brother's complete submission. But if Hubert Walter had secured order in England, over sea Richard found himself face to face with dangers which he was too clear-sighted to undervalue. Destitute of his father's administrative genius, less ingenious in his political conceptions than John, Richard was far from being a mere soldier. A love of adventure, a pride in sheer physical strength, here and there a romantic generosity, jostled roughly with the craft, the unscrupulousness, the violence, of his race; but he was at heart a statesman, cool and patient in the execution of his plans as he was bold in their conception. "The devil is loose; take care of yourself," Philip had written to John at the news of the king's release. In the French king's case a

restless ambition was spurred to action by insults which he had borne during the crusade, and he had availed himself of Richard's imprisonment to invade Normandy, while the lords of Aquitaine rose in revolt under the troubadour Bertrand de Born. Jealousy of the rule of strangers, weariness of the turbulence of the mercenary soldiers of the Angevins or of the greed and oppression of their financial administration, combined with an impatience of their firm government and vigorous justice to alienate the nobles of their provinces on the Continent. Loyalty among the people there was none; even Anjou, the home of their race, drifted towards Philip as steadily as Poitou. But in warlike ability Richard was more than Philip's peer. He held him in check on the Norman frontier and surprised his treasure at Fréteval, while he reduced to submission the rebels of Aquitaine. England, drained by the tax for Richard's ransom, groaned under its burdens as Hubert Walter raised vast sums to support the army of mercenaries which Richard led against his foes.

Crushing taxation had wrung from England wealth which again filled the royal treasury, and during a short truce Richard's bribes detached Flanders from the French alliance, and united the counts of Chartres, Champagne, and Boulogne with the Bretons in a revolt against Philip. He won a valuable aid by the election of his nephew Otto to the German throne, and his envoy, William Longchamp, knitted an alliance which would bring the German lances to bear on the king of Paris. But the security of Normandy was requisite to the success of these wider plans, and Richard saw that its defense could no longer rest on the loyalty of the Norman people. His father might trace his descent through Matilda from the line of Hrolf, but the Angevin ruler was in fact a stranger to the Norman. It was impossible for a Norman to recognize his duke with any real sympathy in the Angevin prince whom he saw moving along the border at the head of Brabançon mercenaries, in whose camp the old names of the Norman baronage were missing, and Merchadé, a Provençal ruffian, held supreme command. The purely military site which Richard selected for the new fortress with which he guarded the border showed his realization of the fact that Normandy could now only be held by force of arms. As a

monument of warlike skill his "Saucy Castle," Château-Gaillard, stands first among the fortresses of the Middle Ages. Richard fixed its site where the Seine bends suddenly at Gaillon, in a great semicircle to the north, and where the valley of Les Andelys breaks the line of the chalk cliffs along its banks. Blue masses of woodland crown the distant hills; within the river curve lies a dull reach of flat meadow, round which the Seine, broken with green islets, and dappled with the gray and blue of the sky, flashes like a silver bow on its way to Rouen. The castle formed part of an entrenched camp, which Richard designed to cover his Norman capital. Approach by the river was blocked by a stockade and a bridge of boats, by a fort on the islet in mid stream, and by the fortified town which the king built in the valley of the Gambon, then an impassable marsh. In the angle between this valley and the Seine, on a spur of the chalk hills which only a narrow neck of land connects with the general plateau, rose at the height of 300 feet above the river the crowning fortress of the whole. Its outworks and the walls which connected it with the town and stockade have for the most part gone, but time and the hand of man have done little to destroy the fortifications themselves —the fosse, hewn deep into the solid rock, with casemates hollowed out along its sides, the fluted walls of the citadel, the huge donjon looking down on the brown roofs and huddled gables of Les Andelys. Even now in its ruin we can understand the triumphant outburst of its royal builder as he saw it rising against the sky: "How pretty a child is mine, this child of but one year old!"

The easy reduction of Normandy on the fall of Château-Gaillard at a later time proved Richard's foresight; but foresight and sagacity were mingled in him with a brutal violence and a callous indifference to honor. "I would take it, were its walls of iron," Philip exclaimed in wrath as he saw the fortress rise. "I would hold it, were its walls of butter," was the defiant answer of his foe. It was Church land, and the Archbishop of Rouen laid Normandy under interdict at its seizure, but the king met the interdict with mockery, and intrigued with Rome till the censure was withdrawn. He was just as defiant of a "rain of blood," whose fall scared his courtiers. "Had an angel from heaven bid him abandon his

work," says a cool observer, "he would have answered with a curse." The twelvemonth's hard work, in fact, by securing the Norman frontier, set Richard free to deal his long-planned blow at Philip. Money only was wanting, and the king listened with more than the greed of his race to the rumor that a treasure had been found in the fields of the Limousin. Twelve knights of gold seated round a golden table were the find, it was said, of the Lord of Châlus. Treasure-trove at any rate there was, and Richard prowled around the walls, but the castle held stubbornly out till the king's greed passed into savage menace; he would hang all, he swore — man, woman, the very child at the breast. In the midst of his threats an arrow from the walls struck him down. He died as he had lived, owning the wild passion which for seven years past had kept him from confession lest he should be forced to pardon Philip, forgiving with kingly generosity the archer who had shot him.

The Angevin dominion broke to pieces at his death. John was acknowledged as king in England and Normandy, Aquitaine was secured for him by its duchess, his mother; but Anjou, Maine, and Touraine did homage to Arthur, the son of his elder brother Geoffry, the late Duke of Brittany. The ambition of Philip, who protected his cause, turned the day against Arthur; the Angevins rose against the French garrisons with which the French king practically annexed the country, and John was at last owned as master of the whole dominion of his house. A fresh outbreak of war in Poitou was fatal to his rival; surprised at the siege of Mirebeau by a rapid march of the king, Arthur was taken prisoner to Rouen, and murdered there, as men believed, by his uncle's hand. The brutal outrage at once roused the French provinces in revolt, while the French king marched straight on Normandy. The ease with which its conquest was effected can only be explained by the utter absence of any popular resistance on the part of the Normans themselves. Half a century before the sight of a Frenchman in the land would have roused every peasant to arms from Avranches to Dieppe, but town after town surrendered at the mere summons of Philip, and the conquest was hardly over before Normandy settled down into the most loyal of the provinces of France. Much of this was due to the wise lib-

erality with which Philip met the claims of the towns to independence and self-government, as well as to the overpowering force and military ability with which the conquest was effected. But the utter absence of all opposition sprang from a deeper cause. To the Norman his transfer from John to Philip was a mere passing from one foreign master to another, and foreigner for foreigner Philip was the less alien of the two. Between France and Normandy there had been as many years of friendship as of strife; between Norman and Angevin lay a century of bitterest hate. Moreover, the subjection to France was the realization in fact of a dependence which had always existed in theory; Philip entered Rouen as the overlord of its dukes; while the submission to the house of Anjou had been the most humiliating of all submissions, the submission to an equal.

It was the consciousness of this temper in the Norman people that forced John to abandon all hope of resistance on the failure of his attempt to relieve Château-Gaillard, by the siege of which Philip commenced his invasion. The skill with which the combined movements for its relief were planned proved the king's military ability. The besiegers were parted into two masses by the Seine; the bulk of their forces were camped in the level space within the bend of the river, while one division was thrown across it to occupy the valley of the Gambon, and sweep the country around of its provisions. John proposed to cut the French army in two by destroying the bridge of boats which formed the only communication between the two bodies, while the whole of his own forces flung themselves on the rear of the French division encamped in the cul-de-sac formed by the river bend, and without any exit save the bridge. Had the attack been carried out as ably as it was planned, it must have ended in Philip's ruin; but the two assaults were not made simultaneously, and were successively repulsed. The repulse was followed by the utter collapse of the military system by which the Angevins had held Normandy; John's treasury was exhausted, and his mercenaries passed over to the foe. The king's despairing appeal to the duchy itself came too late; its nobles were already treating with Philip, and the towns were incapable of resisting the siege train of the French. It was despair of any aid from Normandy that drove John over sea

to seek it as fruitlessly from England, but with the fall of Château-Gaillard, after a gallant struggle, the province passed without a struggle into the French king's hands. In 1204 Philip turned on the south with as startling a success. Maine, Anjou, and Touraine passed with little resistance into his hands, and the death of Eleanor was followed by the submission of the bulk of Aquitaine. Little was left save the country south of the Garonne; and from the lordship of a vast empire that stretched from the Tyne to the Pyrenees John saw himself reduced at a blow to the realm of England. On the loss of Château-Gaillard, in fact, hung the destinies of England, and the interest that attaches one to the grand ruin on the heights of Les Andelys is that it represents the ruin of a system as well as of a camp. From its dark donjon and broken walls we see not merely the pleasant vale of Seine, but the sedgy flats of our own Runnymede.

CHAPTER III

THE GREAT CHARTER, 1204–1265

Section I. — English Literature under the Norman and Angevin Kings

IT is in a review of the literature of England during the period that we have just traversed that we shall best understand the new English people with which John, when driven from Normandy, found himself face to face.

In his contest with Becket, Henry the Second had been powerfully aided by the silent revolution which now began to part the purely literary class from the purely clerical. During the earlier ages of our history we have seen literature springing up in ecclesiastical schools, and protecting itself against the ignorance and violence of the time under ecclesiastical privileges. Almost all our writers from Bæda to the days of the Angevins are clergy or monks. The revival of letters which followed the Conquest was a purely ecclesiastical revival; the intellectual impulse which Bec had given to Normandy traveled across the Channel with the new Norman abbots who were established in the greater English monasteries; and writing rooms or scriptoria, where the chief works of Latin literature, patristic or classical, were copied and illuminated, the lives of saints compiled, and entries noted in the monastic chronicle, formed from this time a part of every religious house of any importance. But the literature which found this religious shelter was not so much ecclesiastical as secular. Even the philosophical and devotional impulse given by Anselm produced no English work of theology or metaphysics. The literary revival which followed the Conquest took mainly the old historical form. At Durham, Turgot and Simeon threw into Latin shape the national annals to the time of Henry the First with an especial regard to northern affairs, while the earlier events of Stephen's reign were noted down by two priors of Hex-

ham in the wild border-land between England and the Scots. These, however, were the colorless jottings of mere annalists; it was in the "Scriptorium" of Canterbury, in Osbern's lives of the English saints, or in Eadmer's record of the struggle of Anselm against the Red King and his successor, that we see the first indications of a distinctively English feeling telling on the new literature. The national impulse is yet more conspicuous in the two historians that followed. The war-songs of the English conquerors of Britain were preserved by Henry, an archdeacon of Huntingdon, who wove them into annals compiled from Bæda and the "Chronicle"; while William, the librarian of Malmesbury, as industriously collected the lighter ballads which embodied the popular traditions of the English kings.

It is in William above all others that we see the new tendency of English literature. In himself, as in his work, he marks the fusion of the conquerors and the conquered, for he was of both English and Norman parentage, and his sympathies were as divided as his blood. The form and style of his writings show the influence of those classical studies which were now reviving throughout Christendom. Monk as he is, he discards the older ecclesiastical models and the annalistic form. Events are grouped together with no strict reference to time, while the lively narrative flows rapidly and loosely along, with constant breaks of digression over the general history of Europe and the Church. It is in this change of historic spirit that William takes his place as first of the more statesman-like and philosophic school of historians who began soon to arise in direct connection with the court, and amongst whom the author of the "Chronicle" which commonly bears the name of "Benedict of Peterborough," with his continuator, Roger of Howden, are the most conspicuous. Both held judicial offices under Henry the Second, and it is to their position at court that they owe the fulness and accuracy of their information as to affairs at home and abroad, their copious supply of official documents, and the purely political temper with which they regard the conflict of Church and State in their time. The same freedom from ecclesiastical bias, combined with remarkable critical ability, is found in the history of William, the Canon of Newburgh, who wrote far

away in his Yorkshire monastery. The English court, however, had become the center of a distinctly secular literature. The treatise of Ranulf de Glanvill, the justiciar of Henry the Second, is the earliest work on English law, as that of the royal treasurer, Richard Fitz-Neal, on the Exchequer is the earliest on English government.

Still more distinctly secular than these, though the work of a priest who claimed to be a bishop, are the writings of Gerald de Barri. Gerald is the father of our popular literature, as he is the originator of the political and ecclesiastical pamphlet. Welsh blood (as his usual name of Giraldus Cambrensis implies) mixed with Norman in his veins, and something of the restless Celtic fire runs alike through his writings and his life. A busy scholar at Paris, a reforming archdeacon in Wales, the wittiest of court chaplains, the most troublesome of bishops, Gerald became the gayest and most amusing of all the authors of his time. In his hands the stately Latin tongue took the vivacity and picturesqueness of the jongleur's verse. Reared as he had been in classical studies, he threw pedantry contemptuously aside. "It is better to be dumb than not to be understood," is his characteristic apology for the novelty of his style: "new times require new fashions, and so I have thrown utterly aside the old and dry method of some authors, and aimed at adopting the fashion of speech which is actually in vogue to-day." His tract on the conquest of Ireland and his account of Wales, which are in fact reports of two journeys undertaken in those countries with John and Archbishop Baldwin, illustrate his rapid faculty of careless observation, his audacity, and his good sense. They are just the sort of lively, dashing letters that we find in the correspondence of a modern journal. There is the same modern tone in his political pamphlets; his profusion of jests, his fund of anecdote, the aptness of his quotations, his natural shrewdness and critical acumen, the clearness and vivacity of his style, are backed by a fearlessness and impetuosity that made him a dangerous assailant even to such a ruler as Henry the Second. The invectives in which Gerald poured out his resentment against the Angevins are the cause of half the scandal about Henry and his sons which has found its way into history. His life was wasted in an inef-

fectual struggle to secure the see of St. David's, but his pungent pen played its part in rousing the spirit of the nation to its struggle with the Crown.

A tone of distinct hostility to the Church developed itself almost from the first among the singers of romance. Romance had long before taken root in the court of Henry the First, where under the patronage of Queen Maud the dreams of Arthur, so long cherished by the Celts of Brittany, and which had traveled to Wales in the train of the exile Rhys ap Tewdor, took shape in the "History of the Britons" by Geoffry of Monmouth. Myth, legend, tradition, the classical pedantry of the day, Welsh hopes of future triumph over the Saxon, the memories of the crusades and of the world-wide dominion of Charles the Great, were mingled together by this daring fabulist in a work whose popularity became at once immense. Alfred of Beverley transferred Geoffry's inventions into the region of sober history, while two Norman *trouvères*, Gaimar and Wace, translated them into French verse. So complete was the credence they obtained, that Arthur's tomb at Glastonbury was visited by Henry the Second, while the child of his son Geoffry and of Constance of Brittany bore the name of the Celtic hero. Out of Geoffry's creation grew little by little the poem of the Table Round. Brittany, which had mingled with the story of Arthur the older and more mysterious legend of the Enchanter Merlin, lent that of Lancelot to the wandering minstrels of the day, who molded it, as they wandered from hall to hall, into the familiar tale of knighthood wrested from its loyalty by the love of woman. The stories of Tristram and Gawayne, at first as independent as that of Lancelot, were drawn with it into the whirlpool of Arthurian romance; and when the Church, jealous of the popularity of the legends of Chivalry, invented as a counteracting influence the poem of the Sacred Dish, the San Graal which held the blood of the Cross invisible to all eyes but those of the pure in heart, the genius of a court poet, Walter de Map, wove the rival legends together, sent Arthur and his knights wandering over sea and land in the quest of the San Graal, and crowned the work by the figure of Sir Galahad, the type of ideal knighthood, without fear and without reproach.

Walter stands before us as the representative of a sudden outburst of literary, social, and religious criticism which followed the growth of romance and the appearance of a freer historical tone in the court of the two Henries. Born on the Welsh border, a student at Paris, a favorite with the king, a royal chaplain, justiciar, and ambassador, the genius of Walter de Map was as various as it was prolific. He is as much at his ease in sweeping together the chit-chat of the time in his "Courtly Trifles" as in creating the character of Sir Galahad. But he only rose to his fullest strength when he turned from the fields of romance to that of Church reform, and embodied the ecclesiastical abuses of his day in the figure of his "Bishop Goliath." The whole spirit of Henry and his court in their struggle with Becket is reflected and illustrated in the apocalypse and confession of this imaginary prelate. Picture after picture strips the veil from the corruption of the mediæval Church, its indolence, its thirst for gain, its secret immorality. The whole body of the clergy, from pope to hedge-priest, is painted as busy in the chase for gain; what escapes the bishop is snapped up by the archdeacon, what escapes the archdeacon is nosed and hunted down by the dean, while a host of minor officials prowl hungrily around these greater marauders. Out of the crowd of figures which fills the canvas of the satirist, pluralist vicars, abbots "purple as their wines," monks feeding and chattering together like parrots in the refectory, rises the Philistine bishop, light of purpose, void of conscience, lost in sensuality, drunken, unchaste, the Goliath who sums up the enormities of all, and against whose forehead this new David slings his sharp pebble of the brook.

It is only, however, as the writings of Englishmen that Latin or French works like these can be claimed as part of English literature. The spoken tongue of the nation at large remained of course English as before; William himself had tried to learn it, that he might administer justice to his subjects; and for a century after the Conquest only a few new words crept in from the language of the conquerors. Even English literature, banished as it was from the court of the stranger, and exposed to the fashionable rivalry of Latin scholars, survived not only in religious works, in poetic para-

phrases of gospels and psalms, but in the great monument of our prose, the English "Chronicle." It was not till the miserable reign of Stephen that the "Chronicle" died out in the Abbey of Peterborough. But the "Sayings of Ælfred," which embodied the ideal of an English king, and gathered a legendary worship round the great name of the English past, show a native literature going on through the reign of Henry the Second. The appearance of a great work of English verse coincides in point of time with the loss of Normandy and the return of John to his island realm. "There was a priest in the land whose name was Layamon; he was son of Leovenath: may the Lord be gracious to him! He dwelt at Earnley, a noble church on the bank of Severn (good it seemed to him!) near Radstone, where he read books. It came in mind to him and in his chiefest thought that he would tell the noble deeds of England, what the men were named, and whence they came, who first had English land." Journeying far and wide over the land, the priest of Earnley found Bæda and Wace, the books too of St. Albin and St. Austin. "Layamon laid down these books and turned the leaves; he beheld them lovingly: may the Lord be gracious to him! Pen he took with fingers and wrote a book skin, and the true words set together, and compressed the three books into one." Layamon's church is now Areley, near Bewdley, in Worcestershire. His poem was in fact an expansion of Wace's "Brut," with insertions from Bæda. Historically it is worthless, but as a monument of our language it is beyond all price. After Norman and Angevin English remained unchanged. In more than thirty thousand lines not more than fifty Norman words are to be found. Even the old poetic tradition remains the same; the alliterative meter of the earlier verse is only slightly affected by rhyming terminations, the similes are the few natural similes of Cædmon, the battles are painted with the same rough, simple joy. It is by no mere accident that the English tongue thus wakes again into written life on the eve of the great struggle between the nation and its king. The artificial forms imposed by the Conquest were falling away from the people as from its literature, and a new England, quickened by the Celtic vivacity of De Map and the Norman daring of Gerald, stood forth to its conflict with John.

Section II. — John, 1204–1215

"Foul as it is, hell itself is defiled by the fouler presence of John." The terrible verdict of the king's contemporaries has passed into the sober judgment of history. Externally John possessed all the quickness, the vivacity, the cleverness, the good humor, the social charm, which distinguished his house. His worst enemies owned that he toiled steadily and closely at the work of administration. He was fond of learned men like Gerald of Wales. He had a strange gift of attracting friends and of winning the love of women. But in his inner soul John was the worst outcome of the Angevins. He united into one mass of wickedness their insolence, their selfishness, their unbridled lust, their cruelty and tyranny, their shamelessness, their superstition, their cynical indifference to honor or truth. In mere boyhood he had torn with brutal levity the beards of the Irish chieftains who came to own him as their lord. His ingratitude and perfidy had brought down his father with sorrow to the grave. To his brother he had been the worst of traitors. All Christendom believed him to be the murderer of his nephew, Arthur of Brittany. He abandoned one wife and was faithless to another. His punishments were refinements of cruelty — the starvation of children, the crushing old men under copes of lead. His court was a brothel where no woman was safe from the royal lust, and where his cynicism loved to publish the news of his victims' shame. He was as craven in his superstition as he was daring in his impiety. He scoffed at priests and turned his back on the mass even amidst the solemnities of his coronation, but he never stirred on a journey without hanging relics round his neck. But with the supreme wickedness of his race he inherited its profound ability. His plan for the relief of Château-Gaillard, the rapid march by which he shattered Arthur's hopes at Mirebeau, showed an inborn genius for war. In the rapidity and breadth of his political combinations he far surpassed the statesmen of his time. Throughout his reign we see him quick to discern the difficulties of his position, and inexhaustible in the resources with which he met them. The overthrow of his continental power only spurred him to the formation of a great league which all but

brought Philip to the ground; and the single revolt of all England was parried by a shameless alliance with the papacy. The closer study of John's history clears away the charges of sloth and incapacity with which men tried to explain the greatness of his fall. The awful lesson of his life rests on the fact that it was no weak and indolent voluptuary, but the ablest and most ruthless of the Angevins, who lost Normandy, became the vassal of the pope, and perished in a struggle of despair against English freedom.

The whole energies of the king were bent on the recovery of his lost dominions on the Continent. He impatiently collected money and men for the support of the adherents of the House of Anjou who were still struggling against the arms of France in Poitou and Guienne, and had assembled an army at Portsmouth in the summer of 1205, when his project was suddenly thwarted by the resolute opposition of the primate and the Earl of Pembroke, William Marshal. So completely had both the baronage and the Church been humbled by his father, that the attitude of their representatives indicated the new spirit of national freedom which was rising around the king. John at once braced himself to a struggle with it. The death of Hubert Walter, a few weeks after his protest, enabled him, as it seemed, to neutralize the opposition of the Church by placing a creature of his own at its head. John de Grey, Bishop of Norwich, was elected by the monks of Canterbury at his bidding and enthroned as primate. In a previous though informal gathering, however, the convent had already chosen its subprior, Reginald, as archbishop, and the rival claimants hastened to appeal to Rome; but the result of their appeal was a startling one both for themselves and for the king. Innocent the Third, who now occupied the papal throne, had pushed its claims of supremacy over Christendom further than any of his predecessors: after a careful examination he quashed both the contested elections. The decision was probably a just one; but Innocent did not stop there; whether from love of power, or, as may fairly be supposed, in despair of a free election within English bounds, he commanded the monks who appeared before him to elect in his presence Stephen Langton to the archiepiscopal see. Personally a better choice could not have been made, for Stephen

was a man who by sheer weight of learning and holiness of life had risen to the dignity of cardinal, and whose after career placed him in the front rank of English patriots. But in itself the step was an usurpation of the rights both of the Church and of the Crown. The king at once met it with resistance, and replied to the papal threats of interdict if Langton were any longer excluded from his see, by a counter threat that the interdict should be followed by the banishment of the clergy and the mutilation of every Italian he could seize in the realm. Innocent, however, was not a man to draw back from his purpose, and the interdict fell at last upon the land. All worship save that of a few privileged orders, all administration of the sacraments save that of a private baptism, ceased over the length and breadth of the country: the church-bells were silent, the dead lay unburied on the ground. The king replied by confiscating the lands of the clergy who observed the interdict by subjecting them in spite of their privileges to the royal courts, and often by leaving outrages on them unpunished. "Let him go," said John, when a Welshman was brought before him for the murder of a priest; "he has killed my enemy!" A year passed before the pope proceeded to the further sentence of excommunication. John was now formally cut off from the pale of the Church; but the new sentence was met with the same defiance as the old. Five of the bishops fled over sea, and secret disaffection was spreading widely, but there was no public avoidance of the excommunicated king. An archdeacon of Norwich who withdrew from his service was crushed to death under a cope of lead, and the hint was sufficient to prevent either prelate or noble from following his example. Though the king stood alone, with nobles estranged from him and the Church against him, his strength seemed utterly unbroken. From the first moment of his rule John had defied the baronage. The promise to satisfy their demand for redress of wrongs in the past reign, a promise made at his election, remained unfulfilled; when the demand was repeated he answered it by seizing their castles and taking their children as hostages for their loyalty. The cost of his fruitless threats of war had been met by heavy and repeated taxation. The quarrel with the Church and fear of their revolt only deep-

ened his oppression of the nobles. He drove De Braose, one of the most powerful of the Lords Marchers, to die in exile, while his wife and grandchildren were believed to have been starved to death in the royal prisons. On the nobles who still clung panic-stricken to the court of the excommunicate king John heaped outrages worse than death. Illegal exactions, the seizure of their castles, the preference shown to foreigners, were small provocations compared with his attacks on the honor of their wives and daughters. But the baronage still submitted; and the king's vigor was seen by the rapidity with which he crushed a rising of the nobles in Ireland, and foiled an outbreak of the Welsh. Hated as he was the land remained still. Only one weapon now remained in Innocent's hands. An excommunicate king had ceased to be a Christian, or to have claims on the obedience of Christian subjects. As spiritual heads of Christendom, the popes had ere now asserted their right to remove such a ruler from his throne and to give it to a worthier than he; and this right Innocent at last felt himself driven to exercise. He issued a bull of deposition against John, proclaimed a crusade against him, and committed the execution of his sentence to Philip of France. John met it with the same scorn as before. His insolent disdain suffered the Roman legate, Cardinal Pandulf, to proclaim his deposition to his face at Northampton. An enormous army gathered at his call on Barham Down; and the English fleet dispelled all danger of invasion by crossing the Channel, by capturing a number of French ships, and by burning Dieppe.

But it was not in England only that the king showed his strength and activity. Vile as he was, John possessed in a high degree the political ability of his race, and in the diplomatic efforts with which he met the danger from France he showed himself his father's equal. The barons of Poitou were roused to attack Philip from the south. John bought the aid of the Count of Flanders on his northern border. The German king, Otto, pledged himself to bring the knighthood of Germany to support an invasion of France. But at the moment of his success in diplomacy John suddenly gave way. It was in fact the revelation of a danger at home which shook him from his attitude of contemptuous defiance. The

bull of deposition gave fresh energy to every enemy. The Scotch king was in correspondence with Innocent. The Welsh princes who had just been forced to submission broke out again in war. John hanged their hostages, and called his host to muster for a fresh inroad into Wales, but the army met only to become a fresh source of danger. Powerless to resist openly, the baronage had plunged almost to a man into secret conspiracies; many promised aid to Philip on his landing. John, in the midst of hidden enemies, was only saved by the haste with which he disbanded his army and took refuge in Nottingham Castle. His daring self-confidence, the skill of his diplomacy, could no longer hide from him the utter loneliness of his position. At war with Rome, with France, with Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, at war with the Church, he saw himself disarmed by this sudden revelation of treason in the one force left at his disposal. With characteristic suddenness he gave way. He endeavored by remission of fines to win back his people. He negotiated eagerly with the pope, consented to receive the archbishop, and promised to repay the money he had extorted from the Church. The shameless ingenuity of the king's temper was seen in his immediate resolve to make Rome his ally, to turn its spiritual thunder against his foes, to use it in breaking up the confederacy it had formed against him. His quick versatile temper saw the momentary gain to be won. On the 15th of May, 1213, he knelt before the legate Pandulf, surrendered his kingdom to the Roman see, took it back again as a tributary vassal, swore fealty, and did liege homage to the pope.

In after-times men believed that England thrilled at the news with a sense of national shame such as she had never felt before. "He has become the pope's man," the whole country was said to have murmured; "he has forfeited the very name of king; from a freeman he has degraded himself into a serf." But we see little trace of such a feeling in the contemporary accounts of the time. As a political measure indeed the success of John's submission was complete. The French army at once broke up in impotent rage, and when Philip turned against the enemy whom John had raised up for him in Flanders, five hundred English ships under the Earl of Salisbury fell upon the fleet which accompanied his

army along the coast and utterly destroyed it. The league which John had so long matured at last disclosed itself. The king himself landed in Poitou, rallied its nobles round him, crossed the Loire in triumph, and won back Angers, the home of his race. At the same time Otto, reenforcing his German army by the knighthood of Flanders and Boulogne, as well as by a body of English troops, threatened France from the north. For the moment Philip seemed lost, and yet on the fortunes of Philip hung the fortunes of English freedom. But in this crisis of her fate France was true to herself and her king; the townsmen marched from every borough to Philip's rescue, priests led their flocks to battle with the Church banners flying at their head. The two armies met near the bridge of Bouvines, between Lille and Tournay, and from the first the day went against the allies. The Flemish were the first to fly; then the Germans in the center were overwhelmed by the numbers of the French; last of all the English on the right were broken by a fierce onset of the Bishop of Beauvais, who charged mace in hand and struck the Earl of Salisbury to the ground. The news of this complete overthrow reached John in the midst of his triumphs in the south, and scattered his hopes to the winds. He was at once deserted by the Poitevin nobles, and a hasty retreat alone enabled him to return, baffled and humiliated, to his island kingdom.

It is to the victory of Bouvines that England owes her Great Charter. From the hour of his submission to the papacy, John's vengeance on the barons had only been delayed till he should return a conqueror from the fields of France. A sense of their danger nerved the baronage to resistance; they refused to follow the king on his foreign campaign till the excommunication were removed, and when it was removed they still refused, on the plea that they were not bound to serve in wars without the realm. Furious as he was at this new attitude of resistance, the time had not yet come for vengeance, and John sailed for Poitou with the dream of a great victory which should lay Philip and the barons alike at his feet. He returned from his defeat to find the nobles no longer banded together in secret conspiracies, but openly united in a definite claim of liberty and law. The

leader in this great change was the new archbishop whom Innocent had set on the throne of Canterbury. From the moment of his landing in England, Stephen Langton had assumed the constitutional position of the primate as champion of the old English customs and law against the personal despotism of the kings. As Anselm had withstood William the Red, as Theobald had rescued England from the lawlessness of Stephen, so Langton prepared to withstand and rescue his country from the tyranny of John. He had already forced him to swear to observe the laws of the Confessor, a phrase in which the whole of the national liberties were summed up. When the baronage refused to sail to Poitou, he compelled the king to deal with them, not by arms but by process of law. Far, however, from being satisfied with resistance such as this to isolated acts of tyranny, it was the archbishop's aim to restore on a formal basis the older freedom of the realm. The pledges of Henry the First had long been forgotten when the justiciar, Geoffrey Fitz-Peter, brought them to light at a council held at St. Albans. There, in the king's name the justiciar promised good government for the time to come, and forbade all royal officers to practise extortion as they prized life and limb. The king's peace was pledged to those who had opposed him in the past; and observance of the laws of Henry the First was enjoined upon all within the realm. Langton saw the vast importance of such a precedent. In a fresh meeting of the barons at St. Paul's he produced the charter of Henry the First, and it was at once welcomed as a base for the needed reforms. All hope, however, hung on the fortunes of the French campaign; the victory at Bouvines gave strength to John's opponents, and after the king's landing the barons secretly met at St. Edmundsbury, and swore to demand from him, if needful by force of arms, the restoration of their liberties by charter under the king's seal. Early in January in the year 1215 they presented themselves in arms before the king, and preferred their claim. The few months that followed showed John the uselessness of resistance; nobles and churchmen were alike arrayed against him, and the commissioners whom he sent to plead his cause at the shire courts brought back the news that no man would help him against the charter.

At Easter the barons again gathered in arms at Brackley and renewed their claim. "Why do they not ask for my kingdom?" cried John in a burst of passion; but the whole country rose as one man at his refusal. London threw open her gates to the forces of the barons, now organized under Robert Fitz-Walter as "Marshal of the Army of God and Holy Church." The example of the capital was followed by Exeter and Lincoln; promises of aid came from Scotland and Wales; the northern barons marched hastily to join their comrades in London. There was a moment when John found himself with seven knights at his back, and before him a nation in arms. He had summoned mercenaries and appealed to his liege lord, the pope; but summons and appeal were alike too late. Nursing wrath in his heart the tyrant bowed to necessity, and called the barons to a conference at Runnymede.

Section III. — The Great Charter, 1215–1217

An island in the Thames between Staines and Windsor had been chosen as the place of conference: the king encamped on one bank, while the barons covered the marshy flat, still known by the name of Runnymede, on the other. Their delegates met in the island between them, but the negotiations were a mere cloak to cover John's purpose of unconditional submission. The Great Charter was discussed, agreed to, and signed in a single day.

One copy of it still remains in the British Museum, injured by age and fire, but with the royal seal still hanging from the brown, shriveled parchment. It is impossible to gaze without reverence on the earliest monument of English freedom which we can see with our own eyes and touch with our own hands, the Great Charter to which from age to age patriots have looked back as the basis of English liberty. But in itself the charter was no novelty, nor did it claim to establish any new constitutional principles. The charter of Henry the First formed the basis of the whole, and the additions to it are for the most part formal recognitions of the judicial and administrative changes introduced by Henry the Second. But the vague expressions of the older charter were now

exchanged for precise and elaborate provisions. The bonds of unwritten custom which the older grant did little more than recognize had proved too weak to hold the Angevins; and the baronage now threw them aside for the restraints of written law. It is in this way that the Great Charter marks the transition from the age of traditional rights, preserved in the nation's memory and officially declared by the primate, to the age of written legislation, of Parliaments and Statutes, which was soon to come. The Church had shown its power of self-defense in the struggle over the interdict, and the clause which recognized its rights alone retained the older and general form. But all vagueness ceases when the charter passes on to deal with the rights of Englishmen at large, their right to justice, to security of person and property, to good government. "No freeman," ran the memorable article that lies at the base of our whole judicial system, "shall be seized or imprisoned, or dispossessed, or outlawed, or in any way brought to ruin: we will not go against any man nor send against him, save by legal judgment of his peers or by the law of the land." "To no man will we sell," runs another, "or deny, or delay right or justice." The great reforms of the past reigns were now formally recognized; judges of assize were to hold their circuits four times in the year, and the King's Court was no longer to follow the king in his wanderings over the realm, but to sit in a fixed place. But the denial of justice under John was a small danger compared with the lawless exactions both of himself and his predecessor. Richard had increased the amount of the scutage which Henry the Second had introduced, and applied it to raise funds for his ransom. He had restored the Danegeld, or land tax, so often abolished, under the new name of "carucage," had seized the wool of the Cistercians and the plate of the churches, and rated movables as well as land. John had again raised the rate of scutage, and imposed aids, fines and ransoms at his pleasure without counsel of the baronage. The Great Charter met this abuse by the provision on which our constitutional system rests. With the exception of the three customary feudal aids which still remained to the Crown, "no scutage or aid shall be imposed in our realm save by the common council of the realm"; and to this Great Council it was provided that prel-

ates and the greater barons should be summoned by special writ, and all tenants in chief through the sheriffs and bailiffs, at least forty days before. The provision defined what had probably been the common usage of the realm; but the definition turned it into a national right, a right so momentous that on it rests our whole Parliamentary life.

The rights which the barons claimed for themselves they claimed for the nation at large. The boon of free and unbought justice was a boon for all, but a special provision protected the poor. The forfeiture of the freeman on conviction of felony was never to include his tenement, or that of the merchant his wares, or that of the countryman his wain. The means of actual livelihood were to be left even to the worst. The under-tenants or farmers were protected against all lawless exactions of their lords in precisely the same terms as these were protected against the lawless exactions of the Crown. The towns were secured in the enjoyment of their municipal privileges, their freedom from arbitrary taxation, their rights of justice, of common deliberation, of regulation of trade. "Let the city of London have all its old liberties and its free customs, as well by land as by water. Besides this, we will and grant that all other cities, and boroughs, and towns, and ports, have all their liberties and free customs." The influence of the trading class is seen in two other enactments, by which freedom of journeying and trade was secured to foreign merchants, and an uniformity of weights and measures was ordered to be enforced throughout the realm. There remained only one question, and that the most difficult of all: the question how to secure this order which the charter had established in the actual government of the realm. The immediate abuses were easily swept away, the hostages restored to their homes, the foreigners banished from the country. But it was less easy to provide means for the control of a king whom no man could trust, and a council of twenty-five barons were chosen from the general body of their order to enforce on John the observance of the charter, with the right of declaring war on the king should its provisions be infringed. Finally, the charter was published throughout the whole country, and sworn to at every hundred-mote and town-mote by order from the king.

"They have given me five and twenty over-kings," cried John in a burst of fury, flinging himself on the floor and gnawing sticks and straw in his impotent rage. But the rage soon passed into the subtle policy of which he was a master. Some days after he left Windsor, and lingered for months along the southern shore, waiting for news of the aid he had solicited from Rome and from the Continent. It was not without definite purpose that he had become the vassal of Rome. While Innocent was dreaming of a vast Christian empire with the pope at its head to enforce justice and religion on his under-kings, John believed that the papal protection would enable him to rule as tyrannically as he would. The thunders of the papacy were to be ever at hand for his protection, as the armies of England are at hand to protect the vileness and oppression of a Turkish sultan or a Nizam of Hyderabad. His envoys were already at Rome, and Innocent, indignant that a matter which might have been brought before his court of appeal as overlord should have been dealt with by armed revolt, annulled the Great Charter and suspended Stephen Langton from the exercise of his office as primate. Autumn brought a host of foreign soldiers from over sea to the king's standard, and advancing against the disorganized forces of the barons John starved Rochester into submission and marched ravaging through the midland counties to the north, while his mercenaries spread like locusts over the whole face of the land. From Berwick the king turned back triumphant to coop up his enemies in London, while fresh papal excommunications fell on the barons and the city. But the burghers set Innocent at defiance. "The ordering of secular matters appertaineth not to the pope," they said, in words that seem like mutterings of the coming Lollardry; and at the advice of Simon Langton, the archbishop's brother, bells swung out and mass was celebrated as before. With the undisciplined militia of the country and the towns, however, success was impossible against the trained forces of the king, and despair drove the barons to seek aid from France. Philip had long been waiting the opportunity for his revenge upon John, and his son Louis at once accepted the crown in spite of Innocent's excommunications, and landed in Kent with a considerable force. As the barons had fore-

seen, the French mercenaries who constituted John's host refused to fight against the French sovereign. The whole aspect of affairs was suddenly reversed. Deserted by the bulk of his troops, the king was forced to fall rapidly back on the Welsh Marches, while his rival entered London and received the submission of the larger part of England. Only Dover held out obstinately against Louis. By a series of rapid marches John succeeded in distracting the plans of the barons and in relieving Lincoln; then after a short stay at Lynn he crossed the Wash in a fresh movement to the north. In crossing, however, his army was surprised by the tide, and his baggage with the royal treasures washed away.

The fever which seized the baffled tyrant in the abbey of Swineshead was inflamed by a gluttonous debauch, and John entered Newark only to die. His death changed the whole face of affairs, for his son Henry was but a child of nine years old, and the royal authority passed into the hands of one who stands high among English patriots, William Marshal. The boy-king was hardly crowned when the earl and the papal legate issued in his name the very charter against which his father had died fighting; only the clauses which regulated taxation and the summoning of Parliament were as yet declared to be suspended. The nobles soon streamed away from the French camp; for national jealousy and suspicions of treason told heavily against Louis, while the pity which was excited by the youth and helplessness of Henry was aided by a sense of injustice in burdening the child with the iniquity of his father. One bold stroke of William Marshal decided the struggle. A joint army of French and English barons under the Count of Perche and Robert Fitz-Walter was besieging Lincoln, when the earl, rapidly gathering forces from the royal castles, marched to its relief. Cooped up in the steep narrow streets, and attacked at once by the earl and the garrison, the barons fled in hopeless rout; the Count of Perche fell on the field; Robert Fitz-Walter was taken prisoner. Louis, who was investing Dover, retreated to London, and called for aid from France. But a more terrible defeat crushed his remaining hopes. A small English fleet, which had set sail from Dover under Hubert de Burgh, fell boldly on the reenforcements which were crossing under the escort

of Eustace the Monk, a well-known freebooter of the Channel. The fight admirably illustrates the naval warfare of the time. From the decks of the English vessels bowmen poured their arrows into the crowded transports, others hurled quicklime into their enemies' faces, while the more active vessels crashed with their armed prows into the sides of the French ships. The skill of the mariners of the Cinque Ports decided the day against the larger forces of their opponents, and the fleet of Eustace was utterly destroyed. The royal army at once closed in upon London, but resistance was really at an end. By the treaty of Lambeth Louis promised to withdraw from England on payment of a sum which he claimed as debt; his adherents were restored to their possessions, the liberties of London and other towns confirmed, and the prisoners on either side set at liberty. The expulsion of the stranger left English statesmen free to take up again the work of reform; and a fresh issue of the charter, though in its modified form, proclaimed clearly the temper and policy of the Earl Marshal.

Section IV. — The Universities

From the turmoil of civil politics we turn to the more silent but hardly less important revolution from which we may date our national education. It is in the reign of Henry the Third that the English universities begin to exercise a definite influence on the intellectual life of Englishmen. Of the early history of Cambridge we know little or nothing, but enough remains to enable us to trace the early steps by which Oxford attained to its intellectual eminence. The establishment of the great schools which bore the name of universities was everywhere throughout Europe a special mark of the new impulse that Christendom had gained from the crusades. A new fervor of study sprang up in the West from its contact with the more cultured East. Travelers like Adelard of Bath brought back the first rudiments of physical and mathematical science from the schools of Cordova or Bagdad. In the twelfth century a classical revival restored Cæsar and Vergil to the list of monastic studies, and left its stamp on the pedantic style, the profuse classical quotations of writers like William of Malmesbury or John of Salisbury. The scholastic philoso-

phy sprang up in the schools of Paris. The Roman law was revived by the imperialist doctors of Bologna. The long mental inactivity of feudal Europe broke up like ice before a summer's sun. Wandering teachers such as Lanfranc or Anselm crossed sea and land to spread the new power of knowledge. The same spirit of restlessness, of inquiry, of impatience with the older traditions of mankind, either local or intellectual, that had hurried half Christendom to the tomb of its Lord, crowded the roads with thousands of young scholars hurrying to the chosen seats where teachers were gathered together. A new power had sprung up in the midst of a world as yet under the rule of sheer brute force. Poor as they were, sometimes even of servile race, the wandering scholars who lectured in every cloister were hailed as "masters" by the crowds at their feet. Abelard was a foe worthy of the menaces of councils, of the thunders of the Church. The teaching of a single Lombard was of note enough in England to draw down the prohibition of a king. When Vacarius, probably a guest in the court of Archbishop Theobald, where Becket and John of Salisbury were already busy with the study of the civil law, opened lectures on it at Oxford, he was at once silenced by Stephen, who was then at war with the Church, and jealous of the power which the wreck of the royal authority was throwing into Theobald's hands.

At the time of the arrival of Vacarius Oxford stood in the first rank among English towns. Its town church of St. Martin rose from the midst of a huddled group of houses, girt in with massive walls, that lay along the dry upper ground of a low peninsula between the streams of Cherwell and the Upper Thames. The ground fell gently on either side, eastward and westward, to these rivers, while on the south a sharper descent led down across swampy meadows to the city bridge. Around lay a wild forest country, the moors of Cowley and Bullingdon fringing the course of Thames, the great woods of Shotover and Bagley closing the horizon to the south and east. Though the two huge towers of its Norman castle marked the strategic importance of Oxford as commanding the river valley along which the commerce of Southern England mainly flowed, its walls formed, perhaps, the least element in its military strength, for on every side but the north

the town was guarded by the swampy meadows along Cherwell, or by the intricate network of streams into which the Thames breaks among the meadows of Osney. From the midst of these meadows rose a mitered abbey of Austin Canons, which, with the older priory of St. Frideswide, gave the town some ecclesiastical dignity. The residence of the Norman house of the D'Oillis within its castle, the frequent visits of English kings to a palace without its walls, the presence again and again of important councils, marked its political weight within the realm. The settlement of one of the wealthiest among the English Jewries in the very heart of the town indicated, while it promoted, the activity of its trade. No place better illustrates the transformation of the land in the hands of its Norman masters, the sudden outburst of industrial effort, the sudden expansion of commerce and accumulation of wealth which followed the Conquest. To the west of the town rose one of the stateliest of English castles, and in the meadows beneath the hardly less stately abbey of Osney. In the fields to the north the last of the Norman kings raised his palace of Beaumont. The canons of St. Frideswide reared the church which still exists as the diocesan cathedral, while the piety of the Norman Castellans rebuilt almost all the parish churches of the city and founded within their new castle walls the church of the Canons of St. George. We know nothing of the causes which drew students and teachers within the walls of Oxford. It is possible that here as elsewhere a new teacher had quickened older educational foundations, and that the cloisters of Osney and St. Frideswide already possessed schools which burst into a larger life under the impulse of Vacarius. As yet, however, the fortunes of the university were obscured by the glories of Paris. English scholars gathered in thousands round the chairs of William of Champeaux or Abelard. The English took their place as one of the "nations" of the French university. John of Salisbury became famous as one of the Parisian teachers. Becket wandered to Paris from his school at Merton. But through the peaceful reign of Henry the Second Oxford was quietly increasing in numbers and repute. Forty years after the visit of Vacarius its educational position was fully established. When Gerald of Wales read his amusing "Topog-

raphy of Ireland" to its students, the most learned and famous of the English clergy were, he tells us, to be found within its walls. At the opening of the thirteenth century Oxford was without a rival in its own country, while in European celebrity it took rank with the greatest schools of the Western world. But to realize this Oxford of the past we must dismiss from our minds all recollections of the Oxford of the present. In the outer aspect of the new university there was nothing of the pomp that overawes the freshman as he first paces the "High," or looks down from the gallery of St. Mary's. In the stead of long fronts of venerable colleges, of stately walks beneath immemorial elms, history plunges us into the mean and filthy lanes of a medieval town. Thousands of boys, huddled in bare lodging-houses, clustering round teachers as poor as themselves in church porch and house porch, drinking, quarreling, dicing, begging at the corners of the streets, take the place of the brightly colored train of doctors and "heads." Mayor and chancellor struggled in vain to enforce order or peace on this seething mass of turbulent life. The retainers who followed their young lords to the university fought out the feuds of their houses in the streets. Scholars from Kent and scholars from Scotland waged the bitter struggle of north and south. At nightfall roisterer and reveler roamed with torches through the narrow lanes, defying bailiffs, and cutting down burghers at their doors. Now a mob of clerks plunged into the Jewry and wiped off the memory of bills and bonds by sacking a Hebrew house or two. Now a tavern row between scholar and townsman widened into a general broil, and the academical bell of St. Mary's vied with the town bell of St. Martin's in clanging to arms. Every phase of ecclesiastical controversy or political strife was preluded by some fierce outbreak in this turbulent, surging mob. When England growled at the exactions of the papacy, the students besieged a legate in the abbot's house at Osney. A murderous town and gown row preceded the opening of the Barons' war. "When Oxford draws knife," ran the old rhyme, "England's soon at strife."

But the turbulence and stir was a stir and turbulence of life. A keen thirst for knowledge, a passionate poetry of devotion, gathered thousands round the poorest scholar, and welcomed

the barefoot friar. Edmund Rich, Archbishop of Canterbury and saint in later days, came to Oxford, a boy of twelve years old, from the little lane at Abingdon that still bears his name. He found his school in an inn that belonged to the abbey of Eynsham, where his father had taken refuge from the world. His mother was a pious woman of the day, too poor to give her boy much outfit besides the hair shirt that he promised to wear every Wednesday; but Edmund was no poorer than his neighbors. He plunged at once into the nobler life of the place, its ardor for knowledge, its mystical piety. "Secretly," perhaps at eventide, when the shadows were gathering in the church of St. Mary's, and the crowd of teachers and students had left its aisles, the boy stood before an image of the Virgin, and placing a ring of gold upon its finger took Mary for his bride. Years of study, broken by a fever that raged among the crowded, noisome streets, brought the time for completing his education at Paris; and Edmund, hand in hand with a brother Robert of his, begged his way, as poor scholars were wont, to the great school of Western Christendom. Here a damsel, heedless of his tonsure, wooed him so pertinaciously that Edmund consented at last to an assignation; but when he appeared it was in company of grave academical officials, who, as the maiden declared in the hour of penitence which followed, "straightway whipped the offending Eve out of her." Still true to his Virgin bridal, Edmund, on his return from Paris, became the most popular of Oxford teachers. It is to him that Oxford owes her first introduction to the "Logic" of Aristotle. We see him in the little room which he hired, with the Virgin's chapel hard by, his gray gown reaching to his feet, ascetic in his devotion, falling asleep in lecture time after a sleepless night of prayer, with a grace and cheerfulness of manner which told of his French training, and a chivalrous love of knowledge that let his pupils pay what they would. "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," the young tutor would say, a touch of scholarly pride perhaps mingling with his contempt of worldly things, as he threw down the fee on the dusty window-ledge, whence a thievish student would sometimes run off with it. But even knowledge brought its troubles; the Old Testament, which with a copy of the Decretals long formed his sole library, frowned down upon a love

of secular learning from which Edmund found it hard to wean himself. At last, in some hour of dream, the form of his dead mother floated into the room where the teacher stood among his mathematical diagrams. "What are these?" she seemed to say; and seizing Edmund's right hand, she drew on the palm three circles interlaced, each of which bore the name of one of the persons of the Christian Trinity. "Be these," she cried, as her figure faded away, "thy diagrams henceforth, my son."

The story admirably illustrates the real character of the new training, and the latent opposition between the spirit of the universities and the spirit of the Church. The feudal and ecclesiastical order of the old medieval world were both alike threatened by the power that had so strangely sprung up in the midst of them. Feudalism rested on local isolation, on the severance of kingdom from kingdom and barony from barony, on the distinction of blood and race, on the supremacy of material or brute force, on an allegiance determined by accidents of place and social position. The university, on the other hand, was a protest against this isolation of man from man. The smallest school was European and not local. Not merely every province of France, but every people of Christendom, had its place among the "nations" of Paris or Padua. A common language, the Latin tongue, superseded within academical bounds the warring tongues of Europe. A common intellectual kinship and rivalry took the place of the petty strifes which parted province from province or realm from realm. What the Church and empire had both aimed at and both failed in, the knitting of Christian nations together into a vast commonwealth, the universities for a time actually did. Dante felt himself as little a stranger in the "Latin" quarter around Monte Ste. Geneviève as under the arches of Bologna. Wandering Oxford scholars carried the writings of Wyclif to the libraries of Prague. In England the work of provincial fusion was less difficult or important than elsewhere, but even in England work had to be done. The feuds of Northerner and Southerner, which so long disturbed the discipline of Oxford, witnessed at any rate to the fact that Northerner and Southerner had at last been brought face to

face in its streets. And here as elsewhere the spirit of national isolation was held in check by the larger comprehensiveness of the university. After the dissensions that threatened the prosperity of Paris in the thirteenth century, Norman and Gascon mingled with Englishmen in Oxford lecture-halls. At a later time the rebellion of Owen Glyndwr found hundreds of Welshmen gathered round its teachers. And within this strangely mingled mass, society and government rested on a purely democratic basis. Among Oxford scholars the son of the noble stood on precisely the same footing with the poorest mendicant. Wealth, physical strength, skill in arms, pride of ancestry and blood, the very grounds on which feudal society rested, went for nothing in the lecture-room. The university was a state absolutely self-governed, and whose citizens were admitted by a purely intellectual franchise. Knowledge made the "master." To know more than one's fellows was a man's sole claim to be a "ruler" in the schools; and within this intellectual aristocracy all were equal. When the free commonwealth of the masters gathered in the aisles of St. Mary's, all had an equal right to counsel, all had an equal vote in the final decision. Treasury and library were at their complete disposal. It was their voice that named every officer, that proposed and sanctioned every statute. Even the chancellor, their head, who had at first been an officer of the bishop, became an elected officer of their own.

If the democratic spirit of the universities threatened feudalism, their spirit of intellectual inquiry threatened the Church. To all outer seeming they were purely ecclesiastical bodies. The wide extension which medieval usage gave to the word "orders" gathered the whole educated world within the pale of the clergy. Whatever might be their age or proficiency, scholar and teacher were alike clerks, free from lay responsibilities or the control of civil tribunals, and amenable only to the rule of the bishop and the sentence of his spiritual courts. This ecclesiastical character of the university appeared in that of its head. The chancellor, as we have seen, was at first no officer of the university, but of the ecclesiastical body under whose shadow it had sprung into life. At Oxford he was simply the local officer of the Bishop

of Lincoln, within whose immense diocese the university was then situated. But this identification in outer form with the Church only rendered more conspicuous the difference of its spirit. The sudden expansion of the field of education diminished the importance of those purely ecclesiastical and theological studies which had hitherto absorbed the whole intellectual energies of mankind. The revival of classical literature, the rediscovery as it were of an older and a greater world, the contact with a larger, freer life, whether in mind, in society, or in politics, introduced a spirit of skepticism, of doubt, of denial, into the realms of unquestioning belief. Abelard claimed for reason the supremacy over faith. Florentine poets discussed with a smile the immortality of the soul. Even to Dante, while he censures these, Vergil is as sacred as Jeremiah. The imperial ruler in whom the new culture took its most notable form, Frederic the Second, the "World's Wonder" of his time, was regarded by half Europe as no better than an infidel. A faint revival of physical science, so long crushed as magic by the dominant ecclesiasticism, brought Christians into perilous contact with the Moslem and the Jew. The books of the rabbis were no longer a mere accursed thing to Roger Bacon. The scholars of Cordova were no mere Paynim swine to Adelard of Bath. How slowly indeed and against what obstacles science won its way we know from the witness of Roger Bacon. "Slowly," he tells us, "has any portion of the philosophy of Aristotle come into use among the Latins. His 'Natural Philosophy' and his 'Metaphysics,' with the 'Commentaries' of Averroes and others, were translated in my time, and interdicted at Paris up to the year of grace 1237, because of their assertion of the eternity of the world and of time, and because of the book of the divinations by dreams (which is the third book, 'De Somniis et Vigiliis'), and because of many passages erroneously translated. Even his 'Logic' was slowly received and lectured on. For St. Edmund, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was the first in my time who read the 'Elements' at Oxford. And I have seen Master Hugo, who first read the book of 'Posterior Analytics,' and I have seen his writing. So there were but few, considering the multitude of the Latins, who were of any account in the philosophy of Aristotle; nay,

very few indeed, and scarcely any up to this year of grace 1292."

We shall see in a later page how fiercely the Church fought against this tide of opposition, and how it won back the allegiance of the universities through the begging friars. But it was in the ranks of the friars themselves that the intellectual progress of the universities found its highest representative. The life of Roger Bacon almost covers the thirteenth century; he was the child of royalist parents, who had been driven into exile and reduced to poverty by the civil wars. From Oxford, where he studied under Edmund of Abingdon, to whom he owed his introduction to the works of Aristotle, he passed to the University of Paris, where his whole heritage was spent in costly studies and experiments. "From my youth up," he writes, "I have labored at the sciences and tongues. I have sought the friendship of all men among the Latins who had any reputation for knowledge. I have caused youths to be instructed in languages, geometry, arithmetic, the construction of tables and instruments, and many needful things besides." The difficulties in the way of such studies as he had resolved to pursue were immense. He was without instruments or means of experiment. "Without mathematical instruments no science can be mastered," he complains afterwards, "and these instruments are not to be found among the Latins, nor could they be made for two or three hundred pounds. Besides, better tables are indispensably necessary, tables on which the motions of the heavens are certified from the beginning to the end of the world without daily labor, but these tables are worth a king's ransom, and could not be made without a vast expense. I have often attempted the composition of such tables, but could not finish them through failure of means and the folly of those whom I had to employ." Books were difficult and sometimes even impossible to procure. "The philosophical works of Aristotle, of Avicenna, of Seneca, of Cicero, and other ancients cannot be had without great cost; their principal works have not been translated into Latin, and copies of others are not to be found in ordinary libraries or elsewhere. The admirable books of Cicero 'De Republica' are not to be found anywhere, so far as I can

hear, though I have made anxious inquiry for them in different parts of the world, and by various messengers. I could never find the works of Seneca, though I made diligent search for them during twenty years and more. And so it is with many more most useful books connected with the science of morals." It is only words like these of his own that bring home to us the keen thirst for knowledge, the patience, the energy, of Roger Bacon. He returned as a teacher to Oxford, and a touching record of his devotion to those whom he taught remains in the story of John of London, a boy of fifteen, whose ability raised him above the general level of his pupils. "When he came to me as a poor boy," says Bacon, in recommending him to the pope, "I caused him to be nurtured and instructed for the love of God, especially since for aptitude and innocence I have never found so towardly a youth. Five or six years ago I caused him to be taught in languages, mathematics, and optics, and I have gratuitously instructed him with my own lips since the time that I received your mandate. There is no one at Paris who knows so much of the root of philosophy, though he has not produced the branches, flowers, and fruit, because of his youth, and because he has had no experience in teaching. But he has the means of surpassing all the Latins if he live to grow old and goes on as he has begun."

The pride with which he refers to his system of instruction was justified by the wide extension which he gave to scientific teaching in Oxford. It is probably of himself that he speaks when he tells us that "the science of optics has not hitherto been lectured on at Paris or elsewhere among the Latins, save twice at Oxford." It was a science on which he had labored for ten years. But his teaching seems to have fallen on a barren soil. From the moment when the friars settled in the universities scholasticism absorbed the whole mental energy of the student world. The temper of the age was against scientific or philosophical studies. The older enthusiasm for knowledge was dying down; the study of law was the one source of promotion, whether in Church or State; philosophy was discredited, literature in its purer forms became almost extinct. After forty years of incessant study, Bacon found himself, in his own words, "un-

heard, forgotten, buried." He seems at one time to have been wealthy, but his wealth was gone. "During the twenty years that I have specially labored in the attainment of wisdom, abandoning the path of common men, I have spent on these pursuits more than two thousand pounds, on account of the cost of books, experiments, instruments, tables, the acquisition of languages, and the like. Add to all this the sacrifices I have made to procure the friendship of the wise, and to obtain well-instructed assistants." Ruined and baffled in his hopes, Bacon listened to the counsels of his friend Grosseteste and renounced the world. He became a friar of the order of St. Francis, an order where books and study were looked upon as hindrances to the work which it had specially undertaken, that of preaching among the masses of the poor. He had written hardly anything. So far was he from attempting to write, that his new superiors had prohibited him from publishing anything under pain of forfeiture of the book and penance of bread and water. But we can see the craving of his mind, the passionate instinct of creation which marks the man of genius, in the joy with which he seized the strange opportunity which suddenly opened before him. "Some few chapters on different subjects, written at the entreaty of friends," seem to have got abroad, and were brought by one of his chaplains under the notice of Clement the Fourth. The pope at once invited him to write. Again difficulties stood in his way. Materials, transcription, and other expenses for such a work as he projected would cost at least £60, and the pope had not sent a penny. He begged help from his family, but they were ruined like himself. No one would lend to a mendicant friar, and when his friends raised the money, it was by pawning their goods in the hope of repayment from Clement. Nor was this all; the work itself, abstruse and scientific as was its subject, had to be treated in a clear and popular form to gain the papal ear. But difficulties which would have crushed another man only roused Roger Bacon to an almost superhuman energy. In little more than a year the work was done. The "greater work," itself in modern form a closely printed folio, with its successive summaries and appendices in the "lesser" and the "third" works (which

make a good octavo more) were produced and forwarded to the pope within fifteen months.

No trace of this fiery haste remains in the book itself. The "Opus Majus" is alike wonderful in plan and detail. Bacon's main plan, in the words of Dr. Whewell, is "to urge the necessity of a reform in the mode of philosophizing, to set forth the reasons why knowledge had not made a greater progress, to draw back attention to sources of knowledge which had been unwisely neglected, to discover other sources which were yet wholly unknown, and to animate men to the undertaking by a prospect of the vast advantages which it offered." The development of his scheme is on the largest scale; he gathers together the whole knowledge of his time on every branch of science which it possessed, and as he passes them in review he suggests improvements in nearly all. His labors, both here and in his after works, in the field of grammar and philology, his perseverance in insisting on the necessity of correct texts, of an accurate knowledge of languages, of an exact interpretation, are hardly less remarkable than his scientific investigations. But from grammar he passes to mathematics, from mathematics to experimental philosophy. Under the name of mathematics was included all the physical science of the time. "The neglect of it for nearly thirty or forty years," pleads Bacon passionately, "hath nearly destroyed the entire studies of Latin Christendom. For he who knows not mathematics cannot know any other sciences: and what is more, he cannot discover his own ignorance or find its proper remedies." Geography, chronology, arithmetic, music, are brought into something of scientific form, and the same rapid examination is devoted to the question of climate, to hydrography, geography, and astrology. The subject of optics, his own special study, is treated with greater fulness; he enters into the question of the anatomy of the eye, besides discussing the problems which lie more strictly within the province of optical science. In a word, the "Greater Work," to borrow the phrase of Dr. Whewell, is "at once the Encyclopedia and the Novum Organum of the thirteenth century." The whole of the after works of Roger Bacon — and treatise after treatise has of late been disentombed from our libraries — are but develop-

ments in detail of the magnificent conception he had laid before Clement. Such a work was its own great reward. From the world around Roger Bacon could look for and found small recognition. No word of acknowledgment seems to have reached its author from the pope. If we may credit a more recent story, his writings only gained him a prison from his order. "Unheard, forgotten, buried," the old man died as he had lived, and it has been reserved for later ages to roll away the obscurity that had gathered round his memory, and to place first in the great roll of modern science the name of Roger Bacon.

Section V. — Henry the Third, 1216–1257

The death of the Earl Marshal in 1219 left the direction of affairs in the hands of a new legate, Pandulf, of Stephen Langton, who had just returned forgiven from Rome, and of the justiciar, Hubert de Burgh. It was an age of transition, and the temper of the justiciar was eminently transitional. Bred in the school of Henry the Second, he had little sympathy with national freedom; his conception of good government, like that of his master, lay in a wise personal administration, in the preservation of order and law. But he combined with this a thoroughly English desire for national independence, a hatred of foreigners, and a reluctance to waste English blood and treasure in Continental struggles. Able as he proved himself, his task was one of no common difficulty. He was hampered by the constant interference of Rome. A papal legate resided at the English court, and claimed a share in the administration of the realm as the representative of its overlord, and as guardian of the young sovereign. A foreign party, too, had still a footing in the kingdom, for William Marshal had been unable to rid himself of men like Peter des Roches or Faukes de Breauté, who had fought on the royal side in the struggle against Lewis. Hubert had to deal too with the anarchy which that struggle left behind it. From the time of the Conquest the center of England had been covered with the domains of great nobles, whose longings were for feudal independence, and whose spirit of revolt had been held in check, partly by the stern

rule of the kings, and partly by their creation of a baronage sprung from the court and settled for the most part in the north. The oppression of John united both the older and these newer houses in the struggle for the charter. But the character of each remained unchanged, and the close of the struggle saw the feudal party break out in their old lawlessness and defiance of the Crown. For a time the anarchy of Stephen's days seemed revived. But the justiciar was resolute to crush it, and he was backed by the strenuous efforts of Stephen Langton. The Earl of Chester, the head of the feudal baronage, though he rose in armed rebellion, quailed before the march of Hubert and the primate's threats of excommunication. A more formidable foe remained in the Frenchman, Faukes de Breauté, the sheriff of six counties, with six royal castles in his hands, and allied both with the rebel barons and Llewelyn of Wales. His castle of Bedford was besieged for two months before its surrender, and the stern justice of Hubert hanged the twenty-four knights and their retainers who formed the garrison, before its walls. The blow was effectual; the royal castles were surrendered by the barons, and the land was once more at peace. Freed from foreign soldiery, the country was freed also from the presence of the foreign legate. Langton wrested a promise from Rome that so long as he lived no future legate should be sent to England, and with Pandulf's resignation in 1221 the direct interference of the papacy in the government of the realm came to an end. But even these services of the primate were small compared with his services to English freedom. Throughout his life the charter was the first object of his care. The omission of the articles which restricted the royal power over taxation in the charter which was published at Henry's accession was doubtless due to the archbishop's absence and disgrace at Rome. The suppression of disorder seems to have revived the older spirit of resistance among the royal ministers; when Langton demanded a fresh confirmation of the charter in Parliament at London, William Brewer, one of the king's councilors, protested that it had been extorted by force and was without legal validity. "If you loved the king, William," the primate burst out in anger, "you would not throw a stumbling-block in the way of the

peace of the realm." The king was cowed by the archbishop's wrath, and at once promised observance of the charter. Two years after, its solemn promulgation was demanded by the archbishop and the barons as the price of a subsidy, and Henry's assent established the principle, so fruitful of constitutional results, that redress of wrongs precedes a grant to the Crown.

The death of Stephen Langton in 1228 proved a heavy blow to English freedom. In 1227 Henry had declared himself of age; and though Hubert still remained justiciar, every year saw him more powerless in his struggle with Rome and with the tendencies of the king. In the medieval theory of the papacy, the constitution of Christendom as a spiritual realm took the feudal form of the secular kingdoms within its pale, with the pope for sovereign, bishops for his barons, the clergy for his under-vassals. As the king demanded aids and subsidies in case of need from his liegemen, so it was believed might the head of the Church from the priesthood. At this moment the papacy, exhausted by its long struggle with Frederick the Second, grew more and more extortionate in its demands. It regarded England as a vassal kingdom, and as bound to aid its overlord. The baronage, however, rejected the demand of aid from the laity, and the pope fell back on the clergy. He demanded a tithe of all the movables of the priesthood, and a threat of excommunication silenced their murmurs. Exaction followed exaction, the very rights of the lay patrons were set aside, and under the name of "reserves" presentations to English benefices were sold in the papal market, while Italian clergy were quartered on the best livings of the Church. The general indignation found vent at last in a wide conspiracy; letters from "the whole body of those who prefer to die rather than be ruined by the Romans" were scattered over the kingdom by armed men; tithes gathered for the pope and foreign clergy were seized and given to the poor, the papal commissioners beaten, and their bulls trodden under foot. The remonstrances of Rome only revealed the national character of the movement; but as inquiry proceeded the hand of the justiciar himself was seen to have been at work. Sheriffs had stood idly by while the violence was done; royal letters had been shown by the

rioters as approving their acts; and the pope openly laid the charge of the outbreak on the secret connivance of Hubert de Burgh. The charge came at a time when Henry was in full collision with his minister, to whom he attributed the failure of his attempts to regain the foreign dominions of his house. An invitation from the barons of Normandy had been rejected through Hubert's remonstrances, and when a great armament gathered at Portsmouth for a campaign in Poitou, it was dispersed for want of transport and supplies. The young king drew his sword and rushed madly on the justiciar, whom he charged with treason and corruption by the gold of France; but the quarrel was appeased, and the expedition deferred for the year. The failure of the campaign in the following year, when Henry took the field in Brittany and Poitou, was again laid at the door of Hubert, whose opposition was said to have prevented an engagement. The papal accusation filled up the measure of Henry's wrath. Hubert was dragged from a chapel at Brentwood where he had taken refuge, and a smith was ordered to shackle him. "I will die any death," replied the smith, "before I put iron on the man who freed England from the stranger and saved Dover from France." On the remonstrances of the Bishop of London Hubert was replaced in sanctuary, but hunger compelled him to surrender; he was thrown a prisoner into the Tower, and though soon released he remained powerless in the realm. His fall left England without a check to the rule of Henry himself.

There was a certain refinement in Henry's temper which won him affection even in the worst days of his rule. The abbey-church of Westminster, with which he replaced the ruder minster of the Confessor, remains a monument of his artistic taste. He was a patron and friend of artists and men of letters, and himself skilled in the "gay science" of the troubadour. From the cruelty, the lust, the impiety, of his father, he was absolutely free. But of the political capacity which had been the characteristic of his house he had little or none. Profuse, changeable, impulsive alike in good and ill, unbridled in temper and tongue, reckless in insult and wit, Henry's delight was in the display of an empty and prodigal magnificence, his one notion of government a dream of arbitrary power. But frivolous as the king's mood was, he clung with a weak

man's obstinacy to a distinct line of policy. He cherished the hope of recovering his heritage across the sea. He believed in the absolute power of the Crown, and looked on the pledges of the Great Charter as promises which force had wrested from the king and which force could wrest back again. The claim which the French kings were advancing to a divine and absolute power gave a sanction in Henry's mind to the claim of absolute authority which was still maintained by his favorite advisers in the Royal Council. The death of Langton, the fall of Hubert de Burgh, left him free to surround himself with dependent ministers, mere agents of the royal will. Hosts of hungry Poitevins and Bretons were at once summoned over to occupy the royal castles and fill the judicial and administrative posts about the court. His marriage with Eleanor of Provence was followed by the arrival in England of the queen's uncles. The "Savoy," as his house in the Strand was named, still recalls Peter of Savoy, who arrived five years later to take for a while the chief place at Henry's council-board; another brother, Boniface, was on Archbishop Edmund's death consecrated to the highest post in the realm save the Crown itself, the archbishopric of Canterbury. The young primate, like his brother, brought with him foreign fashions strange enough to English folk. His armed retainers pillaged the markets. His own archiepiscopal fist felled to the ground the prior of St. Bartholomew-by-Smithfield, who opposed his visitation. London was roused by the outrage; on the king's refusal to do justice a noisy crowd of citizens surrounded the primate's house at Lambeth with cries of vengeance, and the "handsome archbishop," as his followers styled him, was glad to escape over sea. This brood of Provençals was followed in 1243 by the arrival of the Poitevin relatives of John's queen, Isabella of Angoulême. Aymer was made Bishop of Winchester; William of Valence received the earldom of Pembroke. Even the king's jester was a Poitevin. Hundreds of their dependents followed these great lords to find a fortune in the English realm. The Poitevin lords brought in their train a bevy of ladies in search of husbands, and three English earls who were in royal wardship were wedded by the king to foreigners. The whole machinery of administration passed into the hands of men ignorant and contemptuous of

the principles of English government or English law. Their rule was a mere anarchy; the very retainers of the royal household turned robbers, and pillaged foreign merchants in the precincts of the court; corruption invaded the judicature; Henry de Bath, a justiciar, was proved to have openly taken bribes and to have adjudged to himself disputed estates.

That misgovernment of this kind should have gone on unchecked, in defiance of the provisions of the charter, was owing to the disunion and sluggishness of the English baronage. On the first arrival of the foreigners, Richard, the Earl Marshal, a son of the great regent, stood forth as their leader to demand the expulsion of the strangers from the Royal Council, and though deserted by the bulk of the nobles, he defeated the foreign forces sent against him, and forced the king to treat for peace. But at this moment the earl was drawn by an intrigue of Peter des Roches to Ireland; he fell in a petty skirmish, and the barons were left without a head. Edmund Rich, whom we have seen as an Oxford teacher and who had risen to the archbishopric of Canterbury, forced the king to dismiss Peter from court; but there was no real change of system, and the remonstrances of the archbishop and of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, remained fruitless. In the long interval of misrule which followed, the financial straits of the king forced him to heap exaction on exaction. The Forest Laws were used as a means of extortion, sees and abbeys were kept vacant, loans were wrested from lords and prelates, the court itself lived at free quarters whenever it moved. Supplies of this kind, however, were utterly insufficient to defray the cost of the king's prodigality. A sixth of the royal revenue was wasted in pensions to foreign favorites. The debts of the Crown mounted to four times its annual income. Henry was forced to appeal to the Great Council of the realm, and aid was granted on condition that the king confirmed the charter. The charter was confirmed and steadily disregarded; and the resentment of the barons expressed itself in a determined protest and a refusal of further subsidies. In spite of their refusal, however, Henry gathered money enough for a costly expedition for the recovery of Poitou. The attempt ended in failure and shame. At Taillebourg the forces under Henry fled in disgraceful

rout before the French as far as Saintes, and only the sudden illness of Louis the Ninth and a disease which scattered his army saved Bordeaux from the conquerors. The treasury was drained, and Henry was driven to make a fresh appeal to the baronage. The growing resolution of the nobles to enforce good government was seen in their demand that the confirmation of the charter was to be followed by the election of justiciar, chancellor, and treasurer in the Great Council, and that a perpetual council was to attend the king and devise further reforms. The plan broke against Henry's resistance and a papal prohibition. The scourge of papal taxation fell heavily on the clergy. After vain appeals to Rome and to the king, Archbishop Edmund retired to an exile of despair at Pontigny, and tax-gatherer after tax-gatherer with powers of excommunication, suspension from orders, and presentation to benefices, descended on the unhappy priesthood. The wholesale pillage kindled a wide spirit of resistance. Oxford gave the signal by hunting a papal legate out of the city, amid cries of "usurer" and "simoniac," from the mob of students. Fulk Fitz-Warenne in the name of the barons bade a papal collector begone out of England. "If you tarry three days longer," he added, "you and your company shall be cut to pieces." For a time Henry himself was swept away by the tide of national indignation. Letters from the king, the nobles, and the prelates protested against the papal exactions, and orders were given that no money should be exported from the realm. But the threat of interdict soon drove Henry back on a policy of spoliation, in which he went hand in hand with Rome.

The story of this period of misrule has been preserved for us by an annalist whose pages glow with the new outburst of patriotic feeling which this common oppression of the people and the clergy had produced. Matthew Paris is the greatest, as he is in reality the last, of our monastic historians. The school of St. Albans survived indeed till a far later time, but the writers dwindle into mere annalists, whose view is bounded by the abbey precincts, and whose work is as colorless as it is jejune. In Matthew the breadth and precision of the narrative, the copiousness of his information on topics whether national or European, the general fairness and justice of his

comments, are only surpassed by the patriotic fire and enthusiasm of the whole. He had succeeded Roger of Wendover as chronicler at St. Albans; and the "Greater Chronicle," with an abridgment of it which has long passed under the name of Matthew of Westminster, a "History of the English," and the "Lives of the Earlier Abbots," were only a few among the voluminous works which attest his prodigious industry. He was an artist as well as an historian, and many of the manuscripts which are preserved are illustrated by his own hand. A large circle of correspondents—bishops like Grosseteste, ministers like Hubert de Burgh, officials like Alexander de Swereford—furnished him with minute accounts of political and ecclesiastical proceedings. Pilgrims from the East and papal agents brought news of foreign events to his scriptorium at St. Albans. He had access to and quotes largely from state documents, charters, and exchequer rolls. The frequency of the royal visits to the abbey brought him a store of political intelligence, and Henry himself contributed to the great chronicle which has preserved with so terrible a faithfulness the memory of his weakness and misgovernment. On one solemn feast-day the king recognized Matthew, and bidding him sit on the middle step between the floor and the throne, begged him to write the story of the day's proceedings. While on a visit to St. Albans he invited him to his table and chamber, and enumerated by name two hundred and fifty of the English baronies for his information. But all this royal patronage has left little mark on his work. "The case," as he says, "of historical writers is hard, for if they tell the truth they provoke men, and if they write what is false they offend God." With all the fulness of the school of court historians, such as Benedict or Hoveden, Matthew Paris combines an independence and patriotism which is strange to their pages. He denounces with the same unsparing energy the oppression of the papacy and the king. His point of view is neither that of a courtier nor of a churchman, but of an Englishman, and the new national tone of his chronicle is but an echo of the national sentiment which at last bound nobles and yeomen and churchmen together into a people resolute to wrest freedom from the Crown.

Section VI. — The Friars

From the tedious record of misgovernment and political weakness which stretches over the forty years we have passed through, we turn with relief to the story of the friars.

Never, as we have seen, had the priesthood wielded such boundless power over Christendom as in the days of Innocent the Third and his immediate successors. But its religious hold on the people was loosening day by day. The old reverence for the papacy was fading away before the universal resentment at its political ambition, its lavish use of interdict and excommunication for purely secular ends, its degradation of the most sacred sentences into means of financial extortion. In Italy the struggle that was opening between Rome and Frederick the Second disclosed a spirit of skepticism which among the Epicurean poets of Florence denied the immortality of the soul, and attacked the very foundations of the faith itself. In Southern Gaul, Languedoc and Provence had embraced the heresy of the Albigenses and thrown off all allegiance to the papacy. Even in England, though there were no signs as yet of religious revolt, and though the political action of Rome had been in the main on the side of freedom, there was a spirit of resistance to its interference with national concerns which broke out in the struggle against John. "The pope has no part in secular matters," had been the reply of London to the interdict of Honorius. And within the English Church itself there was much to call for reform. Its attitude in the strife for the charter, as well as the after work of the primate, had made it more popular than ever; but its spiritual energy was less than its political. The disuse of preaching, the decline of the monastic orders into rich landowners, the non-residence and ignorance of the parish priests, robbed the clergy of spiritual influence. The abuses of the time foiled even the energy of such men as Bishop Grosseteste of Lincoln. His constitutions forbid the clergy to haunt taverns, to gamble, to share in drinking bouts, to mix in the riot and debauchery of the life of the baronage. But such prohibitions only witness to the prevalence of the evils they denounce. Bishops and deans were withdrawn from their ecclesiastical duties to act

as ministers, judges, or ambassadors. Benefices were heaped in hundreds at a time on royal favorites like John Mansel. Abbeys absorbed the tithes of parishes, and then served them by half-starved vicars, while exemptions purchased from Rome shielded the scandalous lives of canons and monks from all episcopal discipline. And behind all this was a group of secular statesmen and scholars, waging indeed no open warfare with the Church, but noting with bitter sarcasm its abuses and its faults.

To bring the world back again within the pale of the Church was the aim of two religious orders which sprang suddenly to life at the opening of the thirteenth century. The zeal of the Spaniard Dominic was roused at the sight of the lordly prelates who sought by fire and sword to win the Albigensian heretics to the faith. "Zeal," he cried, "must be met by zeal, lowliness by lowliness, false sanctity by real sanctity, preaching lies by preaching truth." His fiery ardor and rigid orthodoxy were seconded by the mystical piety, the imaginative enthusiasm, of Francis of Assisi. The life of Francis falls like a stream of tender light across the darkness of the time. In the frescos of Giotto or the verse of Dante we see him take Poverty for his bride. He strips himself of all, he flings his very clothes at his father's feet, that he may be one with Nature and God. His passionate verse claims the Moon for his sister and the Sun for his brother; he calls on his brother the Wind, and his sister the Water. His last faint cry was a "Welcome, Sister Death!" Strangely as the two men differed from each other, their aim was the same — to convert the heathen, to extirpate heresy, to reconcile knowledge with orthodoxy, to carry the Gospel to the poor. The work was to be done by the entire reversal of the older monasticism, by seeking personal salvation in effort for the salvation of their fellow men, by exchanging the solitary of the cloister for the preacher, the monk for the friar. To force the new "brethren" into entire dependence on those among whom they labored their vow of Poverty was turned into a stern reality; the "Begging Friars" were to subsist on the alms of the poor, they might possess neither money nor lands, the very houses in which they lived were to be held in trust for them by others. The tide of popular enthusiasm which welcomed

their appearance swept before it the reluctance of Rome, the jealousy of the older orders, the opposition of the parochial priesthood. Thousands of brethren gathered in a few years round Francis and Dominic; and the begging preachers, clad in their coarse frock of serge, with a girdle of rope round their waist, wandered barefooted as missionaries over Asia, battled with heresy in Italy and Gaul, lectured in the universities, and preached and toiled among the poor.

To the towns especially the coming of the friars was a religious revolution. They had been left for the most part to the worst and most ignorant of the clergy, the mass-priest, whose sole subsistence lay in his fees. Burgher and artisan were left to spell out what religious instruction they might from the gorgeous ceremonies of the Church's ritual, or the scriptural pictures and sculptures which were graven on the walls of its minsters. We can hardly wonder at the burst of enthusiasm which welcomed the itinerant preacher, whose fervid appeal, coarse wit, and familiar story brought religion into the fair and the market-place. The Black Friars of Dominic, the Gray Friars of Francis, were received with the same delight. As the older orders had chosen the country, the friars chose the town. They had hardly landed at Dover before they made straight for London and Oxford. In their ignorance of the road the two first Gray Brothers lost their way in the woods between Oxford and Baldon, and fearful of night and of the floods, turned aside to a grange of the monks of Abingdon. Their ragged clothes and foreign gestures, as they prayed for hospitality, led the porter to take them for jongleurs, the jesters and jugglers of the day, and the news of this break in the monotony of their lives brought prior, sacrist, and cellarer to the door to welcome them and witness their tricks. The disappointment was too much for the temper of the monks, and the brothers were kicked roughly from the gate to find their night's lodging under a tree. But the welcome of the townsmen made up everywhere for the ill will and opposition of both clergy and monks. The work of the friars was physical as well as moral. The rapid progress of population within the boroughs had outstripped the sanitary regulations of the Middle Ages, and fever or plague or the more terrible scourge of leprosy festered in the wretched hovels of

the suburbs. It was to haunts such as these that Francis had pointed his disciples, and the Gray Brethren at once fixed themselves in the meanest and poorest quarters of each town. Their first work lay in the noisome lazar-houses; it was amongst the lepers that they commonly chose the site of their homes. At London they settled in the shambles of Newgate; at Oxford they made their way to the swampy ground between its walls and the streams of Thames. Huts of mud and timber, as mean as the huts around them, rose within the rough fence and ditch that bounded the friary. The order of Francis made a hard fight against the taste for sumptuous buildings and for greater personal comfort which characterized the time. "I did not enter into religion to build walls," protested an English provincial when the brethren pressed for a larger house; and Albert of Pisa ordered a stone cloister, which the burgesses of Southampton had built for them, to be razed to the ground. "You need no little mountains to lift your heads to heaven," was his scornful reply to a claim for pillows. None but the sick went shod. An Oxford friar found a pair of shoes one morning, and wore them at matins. At night he dreamt that robbers leapt on him in a dangerous pass between Gloucester and Oxford with shouts of "Kill, kill!" "I am a friar," shrieked the terror-stricken brother. "You lie," was the instant answer, "for you go shod." The friar lifted up his foot in disproof, but the shoe was there. In an agony of repentance he woke and flung the pair out of window.

It was with less success that the order struggled against the passion for knowledge. Their vow of poverty, rigidly interpreted as it was by their founders, would have denied them the possession of books or materials for study. "I am your breviary, I am your breviary," Francis cried passionately to a novice who asked for a psalter. When the news of a great doctor's reception was brought to him at Paris, his countenance fell. "I am afraid, my son," he replied, "that such doctors will be the destruction of my vineyard. They are the true doctors who with the meekness of wisdom show forth good works for the edification of their neighbors." At a later time Roger Bacon, as we have seen, was suffered to possess neither ink, parchment, nor books; and only the pope's injunctions could dispense with the stringent observance of the rule. But

one kind of knowledge indeed their work almost forced on them. The popularity of their preaching soon led them to the deeper study of theology. Within a short time after their establishment in England we find as many as thirty readers or lecturers appointed at Hereford, Leicester, Bristol, and other places, and a regular succession of teachers provided at each university. The Oxford Dominicans lectured on theology in the nave of their new church, while philosophy was taught in the cloister. The first provincial of the Gray Friars built a school in their Oxford house, and persuaded Grosseteste to lecture there. His influence after his promotion to the see of Lincoln was steadily exerted to secure study among the friars, and their establishment in the university. He was ably seconded by his scholar, Adam Marsh, or de Marisco, under whom the Franciscan school at Oxford attained a reputation throughout Christendom. Lyons, Paris, and Köln borrowed from it their professors: it was owing, indeed, to its influence that Oxford now rose to a position hardly inferior to that of Paris itself as a center of scholasticism. The three most profound and original of the schoolmen — Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, and Ockham — were among its scholars; and they were followed by a crowd of teachers hardly less illustrious in their day.

But the result of this powerful impulse was soon seen to be fatal to the wider intellectual activity which had till now characterized the universities. Theology in its scholastic form, which now found its only efficient rivals in practical studies such as medicine and law, resumed its supremacy in the schools; while Aristotle, who had been so long held at bay as the most dangerous foe of medieval faith, was now turned by the adoption of his logical method in the discussion and definition of theological dogma into its unexpected ally. It was this very method that led to "that unprofitable subtlety and curiosity" which Lord Bacon notes as the vice of the scholastic philosophy. But "certain it is" — to continue the same great thinker's comment on the friars — "that if these schoolmen to their great thirst of truth and unwearied travel of wit had joined variety of reading and contemplation, they had proved excellent lights to the great advancement of all learning and knowledge." What, amidst all their errors, they

undoubtedly did was to insist on the necessity of rigid demonstration and a more exact use of words, to introduce a clear and methodical treatment of all subjects into discussion, and above all to substitute an appeal to reason for unquestioning obedience to authority. It was by this critical tendency, by the new clearness and precision which scholasticism gave to inquiry, that in spite of the trivial questions with which it often concerned itself, it trained the human mind through the next two centuries to a temper which fitted it to profit by the great disclosure of knowledge that brought about the Renascence. And it is to the same spirit of fearless inquiry as well as to the strong popular sympathies which their very constitution necessitated that we must attribute the influence which the friars undoubtedly exerted in the coming struggle between the people and the Crown. Their position is clearly and strongly marked throughout the whole contest. The University of Oxford, which had now fallen under the direction of their teaching, stood first in its resistance to papal exactions and its claim of English liberty. The classes in the towns on whom the influence of the friars told most directly were the steady supporters of freedom throughout the Barons' war. Adam Marsh was the closest friend and confidant both of Grosseteste and Earl Simon of Montfort.

Section VII. — The Barons' War, 1258–1265

When a thunder-storm once forced the king, as he was rowing on the Thames, to take refuge at the palace of the Bishop of Durham, Earl Simon of Montfort, who was a guest of the prelate, met the royal barge with assurances that the storm was drifting away, and that there was nothing to fear. Henry's petulant wit broke out in his reply. "If I fear the thunder," said the king, "I fear you, Sir Earl, more than all the thunder in the world."

The man whom Henry dreaded as the champion of English freedom was himself a foreigner, the son of a Simon de Montfort whose name had become memorable for his ruthless crusade against the Albigensian heretics in Southern Gaul. Though fourth son of this crusader, Simon became possessor of the English earldom of Leicester, which he inherited through

his mother; and a secret match with Eleanor, the king's sister and widow of the second William Marshal, linked him to the royal house. The baronage, indignant at this sudden alliance with a stranger, rose in a revolt which failed only through the desertion of their head, Earl Richard of Cornwall; while the censures of the Church on Eleanor's breach of a vow of chastity, which she had made at her first husband's death, were hardly averted by a journey to Rome. Simon returned to find the changeable king quickly alienated from him and to be driven by a burst of royal passion from the realm. He was, however, soon restored to favor, and before long took his stand in the front rank of the patriot leaders. In 1248 he was appointed Governor of Gascony, where the stern justice of his rule, and the heavy taxation which his enforcement of order made necessary, earned the hatred of the disorderly nobles. The complaints of the Gascons brought about an open breach with the king. To Earl Simon's offer of the surrender of his post if the money he had spent in the royal service were, as Henry had promised, repaid him, the king hotly retorted that he was bound by no promise to a false traitor. Simon at once gave Henry the lie; "and but that thou bearest the name of king it had been a bad hour for thee when thou utteredst such a word!" A formal reconciliation was brought about, and the earl once more returned to Gascony, but before winter had come he was forced to withdraw to France. The greatness of his reputation was shown in an offer which its nobles made him of the regency of their realm during the absence of King Louis on the crusade. But the offer was refused; and Henry, who had himself undertaken the pacification of Gascony, was glad before the close of 1253 to recall its old ruler to do the work he had failed to do. Simon's character had now thoroughly developed. He had inherited the strict and severe piety of his father; he was assiduous in his attendance on religious services whether by night or day; he was the friend of Grosseteste and the patron of the friars. In his correspondence with Adam Marsh we see him finding patience under his Gascon troubles in the perusal of the Book of Job. His life was pure and singularly temperate; he was noted for his scant indulgence in meat, drink, or sleep. Socially he was cheerful and pleasant

in talk; but his natural temper was quick and ardent, his sense of honor keen, his speech rapid and trenchant. His impatience of contradiction, his fiery temper, were in fact the great stumbling-blocks in his after career. But the one characteristic which overmastered all was what men at that time called his "constancy," the firm, immovable resolve which trampled even death under foot in its loyalty to the right. The motto which Edward the First chose as his device, "Keep troth," was far truer as the device of Earl Simon. We see in his correspondence with what a clear discernment of its difficulties both at home and abroad he "thought it unbecoming to decline the danger of so great an exploit" as the reduction of Gascony to peace and order; but once undertaken, he persevered in spite of the opposition he met with, the failure of all support or funds from England, and the king's desertion of his cause, till the work was done. There is the same steadiness of will and purpose in his patriotism. The letters of Grosseteste show how early he had learned to sympathize with the bishop in his resistance to Rome, and at the crisis of the contest he offers him his own support and that of his associates. He sends to Adam Marsh a tract of Grosseteste's on "the rule of a kingdom and of a tyranny," sealed with his own seal. He listens patiently to the advice of his friends on the subject of his household or his temper. "Better is a patient man," writes honest Friar Adam, "than a strong man, and he who can rule his own temper than he who storms a city." "What use is it to provide for the peace of your fellow citizens and not guard the peace of your own household?" It was to secure "the peace of his fellow citizens" that the earl silently trained himself as the tide of misgovernment mounted higher and higher, and the fruit of his discipline was seen when the crisis came. While other men wavered and faltered and fell away, the enthusiastic love of the people gathered itself round the stern, grave soldier who "stood like a pillar," unshaken by promise or threat or fear of death, by the oath he had sworn.

In England affairs were going from bad to worse. The pope still weighed heavily on the Church. Two solemn confirmations of the charter failed to bring about any compliance with its provisions. In 1248, in 1249, and again in

1255 the Great Council fruitlessly renewed its demand for a regular ministry, and the growing resolve of the nobles to enforce good government was seen in their offer of a grant on condition that the chief officers of the Crown were appointed by the Council. Henry indignantly refused the offer, and sold his plate to the citizens of London to find payment for his household. The barons were mutinous and defiant. "I will send reapers and reap your fields for you," Henry had threatened Earl Bigod of Norfolk when he refused him aid. "And I will send you back the heads of your reapers," retorted the earl. Hampered by the profusion of the court and by the refusal of supplies, the Crown was penniless, yet new expenses were incurred by Henry's acceptance of a papal offer of the kingdom of Sicily in favor of his second son Edmund. Shame had fallen on the English arms, and the king's eldest son, Edward, had been disastrously defeated on the Marches by Llewelyn of Wales. The tide of discontent, which was heightened by a grievous famine, burst its bounds in the irritation excited by the new demands from both Henry and Rome with which the year 1258 opened, and the barons repaired in arms to a Great Council summoned at London. The past half century had shown both the strength and weakness of the charter; its strength as a rallying-point for the baronage, and a definite assertion of rights which the king could be made to acknowledge; its weakness in providing no means for the enforcement of its own stipulations. Henry had sworn again and again to observe the charter, and his oath was no sooner taken than it was unscrupulously broken. The barons had secured the freedom of the realm; the secret of their long patience during the reign of Henry lay in the difficulty of securing its right administration. It was this difficulty which Earl Simon was prepared to solve. With the Earl of Gloucester he now appeared at the head of the baronage in arms, and demanded the appointment of a committee of twenty-four to draw up terms for the reform of the State. Although half the committee consisted of royal ministers and favorites, it was impossible to resist the tide of popular feeling. By the "Provisions of Oxford" it was agreed that the Great Council should assemble thrice in the year, whether sum-

moned by the king or no; and on each occasion "the Commonalty shall elect twelve honest men who shall come to the Parliaments, and at other times when occasion shall be when the king and his council shall send for them, to treat of the wants of the king and of his kingdom. And the Commonalty shall hold as established that which these twelve shall do." Three permanent committees were named — one to reform the Church, one to negotiate financial aids, and a Permanent Council of Fifteen to advise the king in the ordinary work of government. The justiciar, chancellor, and the guardians of the king's castles swore to act only with the advice and assent of the Permanent Council, and the first two great officers, with the treasurer, were to give account of their proceedings to it at the end of the year. Annual sheriffs were to be appointed from among the chief tenants of the county, and no undue fees were to be exacted for the administration of justice in their court.

A royal proclamation in the English tongue, the first in that tongue since the Conquest which has reached us, ordered the observance of these Provisions. Resistance came only from the foreign favorites, and an armed demonstration drove them in flight over sea. The whole royal power was now in fact in the hands of the committees appointed by the Great Council; and the policy of the administration was seen in the prohibitions against any further payments, secular or ecclesiastical, to Rome, in the formal withdrawal from the Sicilian enterprise, in the negotiations conducted by Earl Simon with France, which finally ended in the absolute renunciation of Henry's title to his lost provinces, and in the peace which put an end to the incursions of the Welsh. Within, however, the measures of the barons were feeble and selfish. The Provisions of Westminster, published by them under popular pressure in the following year, for the protection of tenants and furtherance of justice, brought little fruit; and a tendency to mere feudal privilege showed itself in an exemption of all nobles and prelates from attendance at the sheriff's courts. It was in vain that Earl Simon returned from his negotiations in France to press for more earnest measures of reform, or that the king's son, Edward, remained faithful to his oath to observe the Provisions, and openly supported him. Glouces-

ter and Hugh Bigod, faithless to the cause of reform, drew with the feudal party to the side of the king; and Henry, procuring from the pope a bull which annulled the Provisions and freed him from his oath to observe them, regained possession of the Tower and the other castles, appointed a new justiciar, and restored the old authority of the Crown.

Deserted as he was, the Earl of Leicester was forced to withdraw for eighteen months to France, while Henry ruled in open defiance of the Provisions. The confusion of the realm renewed the disgust at his government; and the death of Gloucester removed the one barrier to action. In 1263 Simon landed again as the unquestioned head of the baronial party. The march of Edward with a royal army against Llewelyn of Wales was viewed by the barons as a prelude to hostilities against themselves; and Earl Simon at once swept the Welsh border, marched on Dover, and finally appeared before London. His power was strengthened by the attitude of the towns. The new democratic spirit which we have witnessed in the friars was now stirring the purely industrial classes to assert a share in the municipal administration, which had hitherto been confined to the wealthier members of the merchant gilds; and at London and elsewhere a revolution, which will be described at greater length hereafter, had thrown the government of the city into the hands of the lower citizens. The "communes," as the new city governments were called, showed an enthusiastic devotion to Earl Simon and his cause. The queen was stopped in her attempt to escape from the Tower by an angry mob, who drove her back with stones and foul words. When Henry attempted to surprise Leicester in his quarters in Southwark, the Londoners burst the gates which had been locked by the richer burghers against him, and rescued him by a welcome into the city. The clergy and universities went in sympathy with the towns, and in spite of the taunts of the royalists, who accused him of seeking allies against the nobility in the common people, the popular enthusiasm gave a strength to Earl Simon which enabled him to withstand the severest blow which had yet been dealt to his cause. The nobles drew to the king. The dread of civil war gave strength to the cry for compromise, and it was agreed that

the strife should be left to the arbitration of Louis the Ninth of France. In the Mise of Amiens Louis gave his verdict wholly in favor of the king. The Provisions of Oxford were annulled. Only the charters granted before the Provisions were to be observed. The appointment and removal of all officers of state was to be wholly with the king, and he was suffered to call aliens to his councils. The blow was a hard one, and the decision of Louis was at once confirmed by the pope. The barons felt themselves bound by the award; only the exclusion of aliens — a point which they had not purposed to submit to arbitration — they refused to concede. Simon at once resolved on resistance. Luckily the French award had reserved the rights of Englishmen to the liberties they had enjoyed before the Provisions of Oxford, and it was easy for Simon to prove that the arbitrary power it gave to the Crown was as contrary to the charter as to the provisions themselves. London was the first to reject the decision; its citizens mustered at the call of the town-bell at St. Paul's, seized the royal officials, and plundered the royal parks. But an army had already mustered in great force at the king's summons, and Leicester found himself deserted by baron after baron. Every day brought news of ill. A detachment from Scotland joined Henry's forces. The younger De Montfort was taken prisoner. Northampton was captured, the king raised the siege of Rochester, and a rapid march of Earl Simon's only saved London itself from a surprise by Edward. Betrayed as he was, the earl remained firm to the cause. He would fight to the end, he said, even were he and his sons left to fight alone. With an army reenforced by 15,000 Londoners, he marched to the relief of the Cinque Ports, which were now threatened by the king. Even on the march he was forsaken by many of the nobles who followed him. Halting at Fletching in Sussex, a few miles from Lewes, where the royal army was encamped, Earl Simon with the young Earl of Gloucester offered the king compensation for all damage if he would observe the Provisions. Henry's answer was one of defiance, and though numbers were against him the earl resolved on battle. His skill as a soldier reversed the advantages of the ground; marching at dawn he seized the heights eastward of the

town, and moved down these slopes to an attack. His men, with white crosses on back and breast, knelt in prayer before the battle opened. Edward was the first to open the fight; his furious charge broke the Londoners on Leicester's left, and in the bitterness of his hatred he pursued them for four miles, slaughtering 3000 men. He returned to find the battle lost. Crowded in the narrow space, with a river in their rear, the royalist center and left were crushed by Earl Simon; the Earl of Cornwall, now king of the Romans, who as the mocking song of the victors ran, "makede him a castel of a mulne post" ("he weened that the mill-sails were mangonels" goes on the sarcastic verse), was made prisoner, and Henry himself captured. Edward cut his way into the priory only to join in his father's surrender.

The victory of Lewes placed Earl Simon at the head of the State. "Now England breathes in the hope of liberty," sang a poet of the time; "the English were despised like dogs, but now they have lifted up their head and their foes are vanquished." The song announces with almost legal precision the theory of the patriots. "He who would be in truth a king, he is a 'free king' indeed if he rightly rule himself and his realm. All things are lawful to him for the government of his kingdom, but nothing for its destruction. It is one thing to rule according to a king's duty, another to destroy a kingdom by resisting the law." "Let the community of the realm advise, and let it be known what the generality, to whom their own laws are best known, think on the matter. They who are ruled by the laws know those laws best, they who make daily trial of them are best acquainted with them; and since it is their own affairs which are at stake, they will take more care, and will act with an eye to their own peace." "It concerns the community to see what sort of mên ought justly to be chosen for the weal of the realm." The constitutional restrictions on the royal authority, the right of the whole nation to deliberate and decide on its own affairs and to have a voice in the selection of the administrators of government, had never been so clearly stated before. But the moderation of the terms agreed upon in the Mise of Lewes, a convention between the king and his captors, shows Simon's sense of the difficulties of his position. The question

of the Provisions was again to be submitted to arbitration; and a Parliament in June, to which four knights were summoned from every county, placed the administration till this arbitration was complete in the hands of a new council of nine, to be nominated by the earls of Leicester and Gloucester and the patriotic Bishop of Chichester. Responsibility to the community was provided for by the declaration of a right in the body of barons and prelates to remove either of the three electors, who in turn could displace or appoint the members of the council. Such a constitution was of a different order from the cumbrous and oligarchical committees of 1258. But the plans for arbitration broke down, Louis refused to review his decision, and the pope formally condemned the barons' cause. The earl's difficulties thickened every day. The queen gathered an army in France for an invasion, and the barons on the Welsh border were still in arms. It was impossible to make binding terms with an imprisoned king, yet to release Henry without terms was to renew the war. A new Parliament was summoned in January, 1265, to Westminster, but the weakness of the patriotic party among the baronage was shown in the fact that only twenty-three earls and barons could be found to sit beside the hundred and twenty ecclesiastics. But it was just this sense of his weakness that drove Earl Simon to a constitutional change of mighty issue in our history. As before, he summoned two knights from every county. But he created a new force in English politics when he summoned to sit beside them two citizens from every borough. The attendance of delegates from the towns had long been usual in the county courts when any matter respecting their interests was in question; but it was the writ issued by Earl Simon that first summoned the merchant and the trader to sit beside the knight of the shire, the baron, and the bishop in the Parliament of the realm.

It is only this great event, however, which enables us to understand the large and prescient nature of Earl Simon's designs. Hardly a few months had passed since the victory of Lewes, and already, when the burghers took their seats at Westminster, his government was tottering to its fall. Dangers from without the earl had met with complete success; a

general muster of the national forces on Barham Down put an end to the projects of invasion entertained by the mercenaries whom the queen had collected in Flanders; the threats of France died away into negotiations; the papal legate was forbidden to cross the Channel, and his bulls of excommunication were flung into the sea. But the difficulties at home grew more formidable every day. The restraint upon Henry and Edward jarred against the national feeling of loyalty, and estranged the mass of Englishmen who always side with the weak. Small as the patriotic party among the barons had always been, it grew smaller as dissensions broke out over the spoils of victory. The earl's justice and resolve to secure the public peace told heavily against him. John Giffard left him because he refused to allow him to exact ransom from a prisoner contrary to the agreement made after Lewes. The young Earl Gilbert of Gloucester, though enriched with the estates of the foreigners, resented Leicester's prohibition of a tournament, his naming the wardens of the royal castles by his own authority, and his holding Edward's fortresses on the Welsh Marches by his own garrisons. Gloucester's later conduct proves the wisdom of Leicester's precautions. In the spring Parliament of 1265 he openly charged the earl with violating the Mise of Lewes, with tyranny, and with aiming at the Crown. Before its close he withdrew to his own lands in the west, and secretly allied himself with Roger Mortimer and the Marcher barons. Earl Simon soon followed him to the west, taking with him the king and Edward. He moved along the Severn, securing its towns, advanced westward to Hereford, and was marching at the end of June along bad roads into the heart of South Wales to attack the fortresses of Earl Gilbert in Glamorgan, when Edward suddenly made his escape from Hereford and joined Gloucester at Ludlow. The moment had been skilfully chosen, and Edward showed a rare ability in the movements by which he took advantage of the earl's position. Moving rapidly along the Severn he seized Gloucester and the bridges across the river, destroyed the ships by which Leicester strove to escape across the Channel to Bristol, and cut him off altogether from England. By this movement, too, he placed himself between the earl and his son Simon, who was advancing from the

east to his father's relief. Turning rapidly on this second force Edward surprised it at Kenilworth and drove it with heavy loss within the walls of the castle. But the success was more than compensated by the opportunity which his absence gave to the earl of breaking the line of the Severn. Taken by surprise and isolated as he was, Simon had been forced to seek for aid and troops in an avowed alliance with Llewelyn, and it was with Welsh reenforcements that he turned to the east. But the seizure of his ships and of the bridges of the Severn held him a prisoner in Edward's grasp, and a fierce attack drove him back, with broken and starving forces, into the Welsh hills. In utter despair he struck northward to Hereford; but the absence of Edward now enabled him on the 2d of August to throw his troops in boats across the Severn below Worcester. The news drew Edward quickly back in a fruitless countermarch to the river, for the earl had already reached Evesham by a long night march on the morning of the 4th, while his son, relieved in turn by Edward's countermarch, had pushed in the same night to the little town of Alcester. The two armies were now but some ten miles apart, and their junction seemed secured. But both were spent with long marching, and while the earl, listening reluctantly to the request of the king, who accompanied him, halted at Evesham for mass and dinner, the army of the younger Simon halted for the same purpose at Alcester.

"Those two dinners doleful were, alas!" sings Robert of Gloucester; for through the same memorable night Edward was hurrying back from the Severn by country cross lanes to seize the fatal gap that lay between them. As morning broke his army lay across the road that led northward from Evesham to Alcester. Evesham lies in a loop of the river Avon where it bends to the south; and a height on which Edward ranged his troops closed the one outlet from it save across the river. But a force had been thrown over the river under Mortimer to seize the bridges, and all retreat was thus finally cut off. The approach of Edward's army called Simon to the front, and for the moment he took it for his son's. Though the hope soon died away, a touch of soldierly pride moved him as he recognized in the orderly advance of his enemies a proof of his own training. "By the arm of St.

James," he cried, "they come on in wise fashion, but it was from me that they learnt it." A glance however satisfied him of the hopelessness of a struggle; it was impossible for a handful of horsemen with a mob of half-armed Welshmen to resist the disciplined knighthood of the royal army. "Let us commend our souls to God," Simon said to the little group around him, "for our bodies are the foe's." He bade Hugh Despenser and the rest of his comrades fly from the field. "If he died," was the noble answer, "they had no will to live." In three hours the butchery was over. The Welsh fled at the first onset like sheep, and were cut ruthlessly down in the corn fields and gardens where they sought refuge. The little group of knights around Simon fought desperately, falling one by one till the earl was left alone. So terrible were his sword strokes that he had all but gained the hilltop when a lance thrust brought his horse to the ground, but Simon still rejected the summons to yield, till a blow from behind felled him, mortally wounded, to the ground. Then with a last cry of "It is God's grace," the soul of the great patriot passed away.

CHAPTER IV

THE THREE EDWARDS, 1265–1360

Section I. — The Conquest of Wales, 1265–1284

WHILE literature and science after a brief outburst were crushed in England by the turmoil of the Barons' war, a poetic revival had brought into sharp contrast the social and intellectual condition of Wales.

To all outer seeming Wales had in the thirteenth century become utterly barbarous. Stripped of every vestige of the older Roman civilization by ages of bitter warfare, of civil strife, of estrangement from the general culture of Christendom, the unconquered Britons had sunk into a mass of savage herdsmen, clad in the skins and fed by the milk of the cattle they tended, faithless, greedy, and revengeful, retaining no higher political organization than that of the clan, broken by ruthless feuds, united only in battle or in raid against the stranger. But in the heart of the wild people there still lingered a spark of the poetic fire which had nerved it four hundred years before, through Aneurin and Llywarch Hen, to its struggle with the Saxon. At the hour of its lowest degradation the silence of Wales was suddenly broken by a crowd of singers. The song of the twelfth century burst forth, not from one bard or another, but from the nation at large. "In every house," says the shrewd Gerald de Barri, "strangers who arrived in the morning were entertained till eventide with the talk of maidens and the music of the harp." The romantic literature of the race found an admirable means of utterance in its tongue, as real a development of the old Celtic language heard by Cæsar as the Romance tongues are developments of Cæsar's Latin, but which at a far earlier date than any other language of modern Europe had attained to definite structure and to settled literary form. No other medieval literature shows at its outset the same elaborate

and completed organization as that of the Welsh. But within these settled forms the Celtic fancy plays with a startling freedom. In one of the later poems Gwion the Little transforms himself into a hare, a fish, a bird, a grain of wheat; but he is only the symbol of the strange shapes in which the Celtic fancy embodies itself in the tales or "Mabinogion" which reached their highest perfection in the legends of Arthur. Its gay extravagance flings defiance to all fact, tradition, probability, and revels in the impossible and unreal. When Arthur sails into the unknown world, it is in a ship of glass. The "descent into hell," as a Celtic poet paints it, shakes off the medieval horror with the medieval reverence, and the knight who achieves the quest spends his years of infernal durance in hunting and minstrelsy, and in converse with fair women. The world of the Mabinogion is a world of pure fantasy, a new earth of marvels and enchantments, of dark forests whose silence is broken by the hermit's bell, and sunny glades where the light plays on the hero's armor. Each figure as it moves across the poet's canvas is bright with glancing color. "The maiden was clothed in a robe of flame-colored silk, and about her neck was a collar of ruddy gold in which were precious emeralds and rubies. Her head was of brighter gold than the flower of the broom, her skin was whiter than the foam of the wave, and fairer were her hands and her fingers than the blossoms of the wood-anemone amidst the spray of the meadow fountain. The eye of the trained hawk, the glance of the falcon, was not brighter than hers. Her bosom was more snowy than the breast of the white swan, her cheek was redder than the reddest roses." Everywhere there is an Oriental profusion of gorgeous imagery, but the gorgeousness is seldom oppressive. The sensibility of the Celtic temper, so quick to perceive beauty, so eager in its thirst for life, its emotions, its adventures, its sorrows, its joys, is tempered by a passionate melancholy that expresses its revolt against the impossible by an instinct of what is noble, by a sentiment that discovers the weird charm of nature. Some graceful play of pure fancy, some tender note of feeling, some magical touch of beauty, relieves its wildest extravagance. As Kalweh's greyhounds bound from side to side of their master's steed, they "sport round him like two

sea-swallows." His spear is "swifter than the fall of the dewdrop from the blade of reed grass upon the earth when the dew of June is at the heaviest." A subtle, observant love of nature and natural beauty takes fresh color from the passionate human sentiment with which it is imbued, sentiment which breaks out in Gwalchmai's cry of nature love, "I love the birds and their sweet voices in the lulling songs of the wood," in his watches at night beside the fords "among the untrodden grass" to hear the nightingale and watch the play of the sea-mew. Even patriotism takes the same picturesque form; the Welsh poet hates the flat and sluggish land of the Saxon; as he dwells on his own, he tells of "its seacoast and its mountains, its towns on the forest border, its fair landscape, its dales, its waters, and its valleys, its white sea-mews, its beauteous women." But the song passes swiftly and subtly into a world of romantic sentiment: "I love its fields clothed with tender trefoil, I love the marches of Merioneth, where my head was pillowed on a snow-white arm." In the Celtic love of woman there is little of the Teutonic depth and earnestness, but in its stead a childlike spirit of delicate enjoyment, a faint distant flush of passion like the rose-light of dawn on a snowy mountain peak, a playful delight in beauty. "White is my love as the apple blossom, as the ocean's spray; her face shines like the pearly dew on Eryri; the glow of her cheeks is like the light of sunset." The buoyant and elastic temper of the French *trouvère* was spiritualized in the Welsh singers by a more refined poetic feeling. "Whoso beheld her was filled with her love. Four white trefoils sprang up wherever she trod." The touch of pure fancy removes its object out of the sphere of passion into one of delight and reverence.

It is strange, as we have said, to pass from the world of actual Welsh history into such a world as this. But side by side with this wayward, fanciful stream of poesy and romance ran a torrent of intenser song. The old spirit of the earlier bards, their joy in battle, their love for freedom, their hatred of the Saxon, broke out in ode after ode, in songs extravagant, monotonous, often prosaic, but fused into poetry by the intense fire of patriotism which glowed within them. The rise of the new poetic feeling indeed marked the appear-

ance of a new energy in the long struggle with the English conqueror.

Of the three Welsh states into which all that remained unconquered of Britain had been broken by the victories of Deorham and Chester, two had long ceased to exist. The country between the Clyde and the Dee had been gradually absorbed by the conquests of Northumbria and the growth of the Scot monarchy. West Wales, between the British Channel and the estuary of the Severn, had yielded to the sword of Ecgberht. But a fiercer resistance prolonged the independence of the great central portion which alone in modern language preserves the name of Wales. In itself the largest and most powerful of the British states, it was aided in its struggle against Mercia by the weakness of its assailant, the youngest and least powerful of the English states, as well as by the internal warfare which distracted the energies of the invaders. But Mercia had no sooner risen to supremacy among the English kingdoms than it took the work of conquest vigorously in hand. Offa tore from Wales the borderland between the Severn and the Wye; the raids of his successors carried fire and sword into the heart of the country; and an acknowledgment of the Mercian overlordship was wrested from the Welsh princes. On the fall of Mercia this passed to the West-Saxon kings. The Laws of Howel Dda own the payment of a yearly tribute by "the prince of Aberffraw" to "the king of London." The weakness of England during her long struggle with the Danes revived the hopes of British independence. But with the fall of the Danelaw the Welsh princes were again brought to submission, and when in the midst of the Confessor's reign the Welsh seized on a quarrel between the houses of Leofric and Godwine to cross the border and carry their attacks into England itself, the victories of Harold reasserted the English supremacy. His light-armed troops disembarking on the coast penetrated to the heart of the mountains, and the successors of the Welsh prince Gruffydd, whose head was the trophy of the campaign, swore to observe the old fealty and render the old tribute to the English Crown.

A far more desperate struggle began when the wave of Norman conquest broke on the Welsh frontier. A chain of

great earldoms, settled by William along the border-land, at once bridled the old marauding forays. From his county Palatine of Chester, Hugh the Wolf harried Flintshire into a desert; Robert of Belesme, in his earldom of Shrewsbury, "slew the Welsh," says a chronicler, "like sheep, conquered them, enslaved them, and flayed them with nails of iron." Backed by these greater baronies a horde of lesser adventurers obtained the royal "license to make conquest on the Welsh." Monmouth and Abergavenny were seized and guarded by Norman castellans; Bernard of Neufmarché won the lordship of Brecknock; Roger of Montgomery raised the town and fortress in Powysland which still preserves his name. A great rising of the whole people in the days of the second William at last recovered some of this Norman spoil. The new castle of Montgomery was burned, Brecknock and Cardigan were cleared of the invaders, and the Welsh poured ravaging over the English border. Twice the Red King carried his arms fruitlessly among the mountains, against enemies who took refuge in their fastnesses till famine and hardship had driven his broken host into retreat. The wiser policy of Henry the First fell back on his father's system of gradual conquest, and a new tide of invasion flowed along the coast, where the land was level and open and accessible from the sea. The attack was aided by internal strife. Robert Fitz-Hamo, the Lord of Gloucester, was summoned to his aid by a Welsh chieftain; and the defeat of Rhys ap Tewdor, the last prince under whom Southern Wales was united, produced an anarchy which enabled Robert to land safely on the coast of Glamorgan, to conquer the country round, and to divide it among his soldiers. A force of Flemings and Englishmen followed the Earl of Clare as he landed near Milford Haven, and pushing back the British inhabitants settled a "Little England" in the present Pembrokeshire. A few daring adventurers accompanied the Norman Lord of Kemeys into Cardigan, where land might be had for the winning by any one who would "wage war on the Welsh."

It was at this moment when the utter subjugation of the British race seemed at hand, that a new outburst of energy rolled back the tide of invasion and changed the fitful resistance of the separate Welsh provinces into a national effort

to regain independence. A new poetic fire, as we have seen, sprang into life. Every fight, every hero, had suddenly its verse. The names of the older bards were revived in bold forgeries to animate the national resistance and to prophesy victory. It was in North Wales that the new spirit of patriotism received its strongest inspiration from this burst of song. Again and again Henry the Second was driven to retreat from the impregnable fastnesses where the "Lords of Snowdon," the princes of the house of Gruffydd ap Conan, claimed supremacy over Wales. Once a cry arose that the king was slain, Henry of Essex flung down the royal standard, and the king's desperate efforts could hardly save his army from utter rout. In a later campaign the invaders were met by storms of rain and forced to abandon their baggage in a headlong flight to Chester. The greatest of the Welsh odes, that known to English readers in Gray's translation as "The Triumph of Owen," is Gwalchmai's song of victory over the repulse of an English fleet from Abermenai. The long reigns of the two Llewelyns, the sons of Jorwerth and of Gruffydd, which all but cover the last century of Welsh independence, seemed destined to realize the hopes of their countrymen. The homage which the first succeeded in extorting from the whole of the Welsh chieftains placed him openly at the head of his race, and gave a new character to his struggle with the English king. In consolidating his authority within his own domains, and in the assertion of his lordship over the princes of the south, Llewelyn ap Jorwerth aimed steadily at securing the means of striking off the yoke of the Saxon. It was in vain that John strove to buy his friendship by the hand of his daughter Johanna. Fresh raids on the Marches forced the king to enter Wales; but though his army reached Snowdon, it fell back like its predecessors, starved and broken before an enemy it could never reach. A second attack had better success. The chieftains of South Wales were drawn from their new allegiance to join the English forces, and Llewelyn, prisoned in his fastnesses, was at last driven to submit. But the ink of the treaty was hardly dry before Wales was again on fire; the common fear of the English once more united its chieftains, and the war between John and his barons

removed all dread of a new invasion. Absolved from his allegiance to an excommunicated king, and allied with the barons under Fitz-Walter, — too glad to enlist in their cause a prince who could hold in check the nobles of the border country, where the royalist cause was strongest, — Llewelyn seized his opportunity to reduce Shrewsbury, to annex Powys, where the English influence had always been powerful, to clear the royal garrisons from Caermarthen and Cardigan, and to force even the Flemings of Pembroke to do him homage.

The hopes of Wales rose higher and higher with each triumph of the Lord of Snowdon. The court of Llewelyn was crowded with bardic singers. "He pours," sings one of them, "his gold into the lap of the bard as the ripe fruit falls from the trees." But gold was hardly needed to wake their enthusiasm. Poet after poet sang of "the Devastator of England," the "Eagle of men that loves not to lie nor sleep," "towering above the rest of men with his long red lance," his "red helmet of battle crested with a fierce wolf." "The sound of his coming is like the roar of the wave as it rushes to the shore, that can neither be stayed nor appeased." Lesser bards strung together his victories in rough jingle of rime and hounded him on to the slaughter. "Be of good courage in the slaughter," sings Elidir, "cling to thy work, destroy England, and plunder its multitudes." A fierce thirst for blood runs through the abrupt, passionate verses of the court singers. "Swansea, that tranquil town, was broken in heaps," bursts out a triumphant poet; "St. Clears, with its bright white lands, it is not Saxons who hold it now!" "In Swansea, the key of Lloegria, we made widows of all the wives." "The dread Eagle is wont to lay corpses in rows, and to feast with the leader of wolves and with hovering ravens glutted with flesh, butchers with keen scent of carcasses." "Better," closes the song, "is the grave than the life of the man who sighs when the horns call him forth to the squares of battle." But even in bardic verse Llewelyn rises high out of the mere mob of chieftains who live by rapine, and boast as the Hirlas-horn passes from hand to hand through the hall that "they take and give no quarter." "Tender-hearted, wise, witty, ingenious," he was "the great

Cæsar" who was to gather beneath his sway the broken fragments of the Celtic race. Mysterious prophecies, the prophecies of Merlin the Wise, floated from lip to lip, to nerve Wales to its last struggle with the invaders. Medrawd and Arthur would appear once more on earth to fight over again the fatal battle of Camlan. The last conqueror of the Celtic race, Cadwallon, still lived to combat for his people. The supposed verses of Taliesin expressed the undying hope of a restoration of the Cymry. "In their hands shall be all the land from Brittany to Man: . . . a rumor shall arise that the Germans are moving out of Britain back again to their fatherland." Gathered up in the strange work of Geoffry of Monmouth, these predictions made a deep impression, not on Wales only, but on its conquerors. It was to meet indeed the dreams of a yet living Arthur that the grave of the legendary hero-king at Glastonbury was found and visited by Henry the Second. But neither trick nor conquest could shake the firm faith of the Celt in the ultimate victory of his race. "Think you," said Henry to a Welsh chieftain who had joined his host, "that your people of rebels can withstand my army?" "My people," replied the chieftain, "may be weakened by your might, and even in great part destroyed, but unless the wrath of God be on the side of its foe it will not perish utterly. Nor deem I that other race or other tongue will answer for this corner of the world before the Judge of all at the last day save this people and tongue of Wales." So ran the popular rhyme, "Their Lord they will praise, their speech they shall keep, their land they shall lose — except wild Wales." Faith and prophecy seemed justified by the growing strength of the British people. The weakness and dissensions which characterized the reign of Henry the Third enabled Llewelyn ap Jorwerth to preserve a practical independence till the close of his life, when a fresh acknowledgment of the English supremacy was wrested from him by Archbishop Edmund. But the triumphs of his arms were renewed by Llewelyn the son of Gruffydd, whose ravages swept the border to the very gates of Chester, while his conquest of Glamorgan seemed to bind the whole people together in a power strong enough to meet any attack from the stranger. Throughout the Barons' war, Llewelyn re-

mained master of Wales. Even at its close the threat of an attack from the now united kingdom only forced him to submission on a practical acknowledgment of his sovereignty. The chieftain whom the English kings had till then scrupulously designated as "Prince of Aberffraw" was now allowed the title of "Prince of Wales," and his right to receive homage from the other nobles of his principality was allowed.

Near, however, as Llewelyn seemed to the final realization of his aims, he was still a vassal of the English Crown, and the accession of a new sovereign to the throne was at once followed by the demand of his homage. The youth of Edward the First had already given promise of the high qualities which distinguished him as an English ruler. The passion for law, the instinct of good government, which were to make his reign so memorable in our history, had declared themselves from the first. He had sided with the barons at the outset of their struggle with Henry; he had striven to keep his father true to the Provisions of Oxford. It was only when the Crown seemed falling into bondage that Edward passed to the royal side; and when the danger he dreaded was over, he returned to his older attitude. In the first flush of victory, while the doom of Simon was yet unknown, Edward stood alone in desiring his captivity against the cry of the Marcher lords for his death. When all was over he wept over the corpse of his cousin, Henry de Montfort, and followed the earl's body to the tomb. It was from Earl Simon, as the earl owned with a proud bitterness ere his death, that Edward had learned the skill in warfare which distinguished him among the princes of his time. But he had learned the far nobler lesson of a self-government which lifted him high above them as a ruler among men. Severing himself from the brutal triumph of the royalist party, he secured fair terms to the conquered, and after crushing the last traces of resistance he won the adoption by the Crown of the constitutional system of government for which the barons had fought. So utterly was the land at rest that he felt free to join a crusade in Palestine. His father's death recalled him home to meet at once the difficulty of Wales. During two years Llewelyn rejected the king's repeated summons to him to perform his homage, till Edward's patience was exhausted,

and the royal army marched into North Wales. The fabric of Welsh greatness fell at a single blow; the chieftains of the south and center who had so lately sworn fealty to Llewelyn deserted him to join his English enemies; an English fleet reduced Anglesea, and the prince, cooped up in his fastnesses, was forced to throw himself on the royal mercy. With characteristic moderation his conqueror contented himself with adding to the English dominions the coast district as far as Conway, and providing that the title of Prince of Wales should cease at Llewelyn's death. A heavy fine which he had incurred was remitted, and Eleanor, the daughter of Simon of Montfort, who had been arrested on her way to join him as his wife, was wedded to him at the English court. For four years all was quiet, but the persuasions of his brother David, who had deserted him in the previous war, and whose desertion had been rewarded with an English lordship, roused Llewelyn to a fresh revolt. A prophecy of Merlin had announced that when English money became round the Prince of Wales should be crowned at London; and a new coinage of copper money, coupled with the prohibition to break the silver penny into halves and quarters, as had been usual, was supposed to have fulfilled the prediction. In the campaign which followed the prince held out in Snowdon with the stubbornness of despair, and the rout of an English detachment which had thrown a bridge across the Menai Straits into Anglesea prolonged the contest into the winter. Terrible, however, as were the sufferings of the English army, Edward's firmness remained unbroken, and rejecting all proposals of retreat he issued orders for the formation of a new army at Caermarthen to complete the circle of investment round Llewelyn. The prince sallied from his mountain hold for a raid upon Radnorshire, and fell in a petty skirmish on the banks of the Wye. With him died the independence of his race. After six months of flight his brother David was arrested and sentenced in full Parliament to a traitor's death. The submission of the lesser chieftains was followed by the building of strong castles at Conway and Caernarvon, and the settlement of English barons on the confiscated soil. A wiser instinct of government led Edward to introduce by the "Statute of Wales" English law and the English administration of justice into Wales.

But little came of the attempt; and it was not till the time of Henry the Eighth that the country was actually incorporated in England. What Edward had really done was to break the Welsh resistance. His policy of justice (for the "massacre of the bards" is a mere fable) accomplished its end, and in spite of two later rebellions Wales ceased to be any serious danger to England for a hundred years.

Section II. — The English Parliament, 1283–1295

The conquest of Wales marked the adoption of a new attitude and policy on the part of the Crown. From the earliest moment of his reign Edward the First definitely abandoned all dreams of recovering the foreign dominions which his grandfather had lost. He concentrated himself on the consolidation and good government of England itself. We can only fairly judge his annexation of Wales, or his attempt to annex Scotland, if we regard them as parts of the same scheme of national administration to which we owe his final establishment of our judicature, our legislation, our Parliament. The king's English policy, like his English name, was the sign of a new epoch. The long period of national formation had come practically to an end. With the reign of Edward begins modern England, the constitutional England in which we live. It is not that any chasm separates our history before it from our history after it, as the chasm of the Revolution divides the history of France, for we have traced the rudiments of our constitution to the first moment of the English settlement in Britain. But it is with these as with our language. The tongue of Ælfred is the very tongue we speak, but in spite of its identity with modern English it has to be learned like the tongue of a stranger. On the other hand, the English of Chaucer is almost as intelligible as our own. In the first the historian and philologist can study the origin and development of our national speech, in the last a schoolboy can enjoy the story of Troilus and Cressida, or listen to the gay chat of the Canterbury Pilgrims. In precisely the same way a knowledge of our earliest laws is indispensable for the right understanding of later legislation, its origin and its development, while the principles of our

parliamentary system must necessarily be studied in th
Meetings of Wise Men before the Conquest or the Grea
Council of barons after it. But the Parliaments whic
Edward gathered at the close of his reign are not merel
illustrative of the history of later Parliaments, they are abs
lutely identical with those which still sit at St. Stephen's; an
a statute of Edward, if unrepealed, can be pleaded in ou
courts as formally as a statute of Victoria. In a word, th
long struggle of the constitution for actual existence ha
come to an end. The contests which follow are not contes
which tell, like those which preceded them, on the actu
fabric of our political institutions; they are simply stages i
the rough discipline by which England has learned, and
still learning, how best to use and how wisely to develop th
latent powers of its national life, how to adjust the balance
its social and political forces, and to adapt its constitution
forms to the varying conditions of the time. From the reig
of Edward, in fact, we are face to face with modern Englan
Kings, lords, commons, the courts of justice, the forms
public administration, our local divisions and provincial juri
dictions, the relations of Church and State, in great measu
the framework of society itself, have all taken the shap
which they still essentially retain.

Much of this great change is doubtless attributable to th
general temper of the age, whose special task and obje
seemed to be that of reducing to distinct form the gre
principles which had sprung into a new and vigorous li
during the century that preceded it. As the opening of th
thirteenth century had been an age of founders, creator
discoverers, so its close was an age of lawyers; the most illu
trious men of the time were no longer such as Bacon, or Ea
Simon, or Francis of Assisi, but men such as St. Louis
France or Alfonso the Wise, organizers, administrator
framers of laws and institutions. It was to this class th
Edward himself belonged. He had little of creative geni
or political originality in his character, but he possessed in
high degree the faculty of organization, and his passiona
love of law broke out even in the legal chicanery to whi
he sometimes stooped. In the judicial reforms to which
much of his attention was directed, he showed himself, if n

an "English Justinian," at any rate a clear-sighted man of business, developing, reforming, bringing into a lasting shape the institutions of his predecessors. One of his first cares was to complete the judicial reforms begun by Henry the Second. The most important court of civil jurisdiction, the Sheriff's or County Court, remained unchanged, both in the extent of its jurisdiction and the character of the sheriff as a royal officer. But the superior courts into which the King's Court had since the Great Charter divided itself, those of the King's Bench, Exchequer, and Common Pleas, now received a distinct staff of judges for each court. Of far greater importance than this change, which was in effect but the completion of a process of severance that had long been going on, was the establishment of an equitable jurisdiction side by side with that of the common law. In his reform of 1178 Henry the Second had broken up the older King's Court, which had till then served as the final Court of Appeal, by the severance of the purely legal judges who had been gradually added to it from the general body of his councilors. The judges thus severed from the council retained the name and the ordinary jurisdiction of "the King's Court," while all cases in which they failed to do justice were reserved for the special cognizance of the royal council itself. To this final jurisdiction of the King in Council Edward gave a wide development. His assembly of the ministers, the higher permanent officials, and the law officers of the Crown, for the first time reserved to itself in its judicial capacity the correction of all breaches of the law which the lower courts had failed to repress, whether from weakness, partiality, or corruption, and especially of those lawless outbreaks of the more powerful baronage which defied the common authority of the judges. Though regarded with jealousy by Parliament, the jurisdiction of the council seems to have been steadily put in force through the two centuries which followed; in the reign of Henry the Seventh it took legal and statutory form in the shape of the Court of Star Chamber, and its powers are still exercised in our own day by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. But the same duty of the Crown to do justice where its courts fell short of giving due redress for wrong expressed itself in the jurisdic-

tion of the chancellor. This great officer of state, who had perhaps originally acted only as president of the council when discharging its judicial functions, acquired at a very early date an independent judicial position of the same nature. It is by remembering the origin of the Court of Chancery that we understand the nature of the powers it gradually acquired. All grievances of the subject, especially those which sprang from the misconduct of government officials or of powerful oppressors, fell within its cognizance as they fell within that of the Royal Council, and to these were added disputes respecting the wardship of infants, dower, rent-charges, or tithes. Its equitable jurisdiction sprang from the defective nature and the technical and unbending rules of the common law. As the council had given redress in cases where law became injustice, so the Court of Chancery interfered without regard to the rules of procedure adopted by the common law courts on the petition of a party for whose grievance the common law provided no adequate remedy. An analogous extension of his powers enabled the chancellor to afford relief in cases of fraud, accident, or abuse of trust, and this side of his jurisdiction was largely extended at a later time through the results of legislation on the tenure of land by ecclesiastical bodies. The separate powers of the chancellor, whatever was the original date at which they were first exercised, seem to have been thoroughly established under Edward the First.

In legislation, as in his judicial reforms, Edward renewed and consolidated the principles which had been already brought into practical working by Henry the Second. Significant acts announced his determination to carry out Henry's policy of limiting the independent jurisdiction of the Church. He was resolute to force it to become thoroughly national by bearing its due part of the common national burdens, and to break its growing dependence upon Rome. The defiant resistance of the ecclesiastical body was answered in an emphatic way. By falling into the "dead hand" or "mortmain" of the Church, land ceased to render its feudal services; and the Statute "of Mortmain" now forbade the alienation of land to religious bodies in such wise that it should cease to render its due service to the king. The restriction was prob-

ably no beneficial one to the country at large, for churchmen were the best landlords, and it was soon evaded by the ingenuity of the clerical lawyers; but it marked the growing jealousy of any attempt to set aside what was national from serving the general need and profit of the nation. Its immediate effect was to stir the clergy to a bitter resentment. But Edward remained firm, and when the bishops proposed to restrict the royal courts from dealing with cases of patronage or causes which touched the chattels of churchmen, he met their proposals by an instant prohibition. His care for the trading classes was seen in the Statute of Merchants, which provided for the registration of the debts of traders, and for their recovery by distraint of the debtor's goods and the imprisonment of his person. The Statute of Winchester, the greatest of Edward's measures for the enforcement of public order, revived and reorganized the old institutions of national police and national defense. It regulated the action of the hundred, the duty of watch and ward, and the gathering of the fyrd or militia of the realm as Henry the Second had molded it into form in his Assize of Arms. Every man was bound to hold himself in readiness, duly armed, for the king's service in case of invasion or revolt, or to pursue felons when hue and cry were raised after them. Every district was made responsible for crimes committed within its bounds; the gates of each town were required to be closed at nightfall, and all strangers to give an account of themselves to its magistrates. As a security for travelers against sudden attacks from robbers, all brushwood was to be destroyed for a space of two hundred feet on either side the public highway, a provision which illustrates at once the social and physical condition of the country at the time. To enforce the observance of this act knights were appointed in every shire under the name of Conservators of the Peace, a name which, as the convenience of these local magistrates was more sensibly felt and their powers more largely extended, was changed for that which they still retain of "Justices of the Peace." The great measure which is commonly known as the Statute "Quia Emptores" is one of those legislative efforts which mark the progress of a wide social revolution in the country at large. The number of the greater barons was diminishing

every day, while the number of the country gentry and of the more substantial yeomanry was increasing with the increase of the national wealth. This increase showed itself in the growing desire to become proprietors of land. Tenants of the greater barons received under-tenants on condition of their rendering them similar services to those which they themselves rendered to their lords; and the baronage, while duly receiving the services in compensation for which they had originally granted their lands in fee, saw with jealousy the feudal profits of these new under-tenants, the profits of wardship or of reliefs and the like, in a word, the whole increase in the value of the estate consequent on its subdivision and higher cultivation, passing into other hands than their own. The purpose of the statute was to check this process by providing that in any case of alienation the subtenant should henceforth hold, not of the tenant, but directly of the superior lord. But its result was to promote instead of hindering the transfer and subdivision of land. The tenant who was before compelled to retain in any case so much of the estate as enabled him to discharge his feudal services to the overlord of whom he held it, was now enabled by a process analogous to the modern sale of "tenant-right" to transfer both land and services to new holders. However small the estates thus created might be, the bulk were held directly of the Crown; and this class of lesser gentry and freeholders grew steadily from this time in numbers and importance.

It is to the same social revolution, as well as to the large statesmanship of Edward the First, that we owe our Parliament. Neither the Meeting of the Wise Men before the Conquest, nor the Great Council of the barons after it, had been in any way representative bodies. The first theoretically included all free holders of land, but it shrank at an early time into a gathering of earls, higher nobles, and bishops, with the officers and thegns of the royal household. Little change was made in the composition of this assembly by the Conquest, for the Great Council of the Norman kings was held to include all tenants who held directly of the Crown, the bishops and greater abbots (whose character as independent spiritual members tended more and more to merge in their position as barons), and the great officers of the

court. But though its composition remained the same, the character of the assembly was essentially altered. From a free gathering of "Wise Men" it sank to a royal court of feudal vassals. Its functions seem to have become almost nominal, and its powers to have been restricted to the sanctioning, without debate or possibility of refusal, all grants demanded from it by the Crown. Its "counsel and consent," however, remained necessary for the legal validity of every great fiscal or political measure, and its very existence was an effectual protest against the imperial theories advanced by the lawyers of Henry the Second, theories which declared all legislative power to reside wholly in the sovereign. It was in fact under Henry that these assemblies became more regular, and their functions more important. The reforms which marked his reign were issued in the Great Council, and even financial matters were suffered to be debated there. But it was not till the grant of the Great Charter that its powers over taxation were formally recognized, and the principle established that no burden beyond the customary feudal aids might be imposed "save by the Common Council of the realm." The same great document first expressly regulated its form. In theory, as we have seen, the assembly consisted of all who held land directly of the Crown. But the same causes which restricted attendance at the Witenagemot to the greater nobles told on the actual composition of the council of barons. While the attendance of the ordinary tenants in chief, the knights or "lesser barons," was burdensome from its expense to themselves, their numbers and their dependence on the higher nobles made their assembly dangerous to the Crown. As early, therefore, as the time of Henry the First we find a distinction recognized between the "greater barons," of whom the council was usually composed, and the "lesser barons" who formed the bulk of the tenants of the Crown. But though the attendance of the latter had become rare, their right of attendance remained intact. While enacting that the prelates and greater barons should be summoned by special writs to each gathering of the council, a remarkable provision of the Great Charter orders a general summons to be issued through the sheriff to all direct tenants of the Crown. The provision was probably

intended to rouse the lesser baronage to the exercise of rights which had practically passed into desuetude, but as the clause is omitted in later issues of the charter, we may doubt whether the principle it embodied ever received more than a very limited application. There are traces of the attendance of a few of the lesser knighthood, gentry perhaps of the neighborhood where the assembly was held, in some of its meetings under Henry the Third, but till a late period in the reign of his successor the Great Council practically remained a gathering of the greater barons, the prelates, and the officers of the Crown. The change which the Great Charter had failed to accomplish was now, however, brought about by the social circumstances of the time. One of the most remarkable of these was the steady decrease in the number of the greater nobles. The bulk of the earldoms had already lapsed to the Crown through the extinction of the families of their possessors; of the greater baronies, many had practically ceased to exist by their division among coheiresses, many through the constant struggle of the poorer barons to rid themselves of their rank by a disclaimer, so as to escape the burden of higher taxation and attendance in Parliament which it involved. How far this diminution had gone we may see from the fact that hardly more than a hundred barons sat in the earlier councils of Edward's reign. But while the number of those who actually possessed the privilege of assisting in Parliament was rapidly diminishing, the numbers and wealth of the "lesser baronage," whose right of attendance had become a mere constitutional tradition, was as rapidly increasing. The long peace and prosperity of the realm, the extension of its commerce, and the increased export of wool were swelling the ranks and incomes of the country gentry as well as of the freeholders and substantial yeomanry. We have already noticed the growing passion for the possession of land which makes this reign so critical a moment in the history of the English freeholder; but the same tendency had to some extent existed in the preceding century, and it was a consciousness of the growing importance of this class of rural proprietors which induced the barons at the time of the charter to make their fruitless attempt to induce them to take part in the deliberations of the Great Council. But while the barons

desired their presence as an aid against the Crown, the Crown itself desired it as a means of rendering taxation more efficient. So long as the Great Council remained a mere assembly of magnates, it was necessary for the king's ministers to treat separately with the other orders of the State as to the amount and assessment of their contributions. The grant made in the Great Council was binding only on the barons and prelates who made it; but before the aids of the boroughs, the Church, or the shires could reach the royal treasury, a separate negotiation had to be conducted by the officers of the Exchequer with the reeves of each town, the sheriff and shire court of each county, and the archdeacons of each diocese. Bargains of this sort would be the more tedious and disappointing as the necessities of the Crown increased in the later years of Edward, and it became a matter of fiscal expediency to obtain the sanction of any proposed taxation through the presence of these classes in the Great Council itself.

The effort, however, to revive the old personal attendance of the lesser baronage, which had broken down half a century before, could hardly be renewed at a time when the increase of their numbers made it more impracticable than ever; but a means of escape from this difficulty was fortunately suggested by the very nature of the court through which alone a summons could be addressed to the landed knighthood. Amidst the many judicial reforms of Henry or Edward the Shire Court remained unchanged. The haunted mound or the immemorial oak round which the assembly gathered (for the court was often held in the open air) were the relics of a time before the free kingdom had sunk into a shire, and its folkmote into a County Court. But save that the king's reeve had taken the place of the king, and that the Norman legislation had displaced the bishop and set four coroners by the sheriff's side, the gathering of the freeholders remained much as of old. The local knighthood, the yeomanry, the husbandmen of the county, were all represented in the crowd that gathered round the sheriff, as, guarded by his liveried followers, he published the king's writs, announced his demand of aids, received the presentment of criminals and the inquest of the local jurors, assessed the taxation of each district, or listened solemnly to appeals for justice, civil and criminal, from

all who held themselves oppressed in the lesser courts of the hundred or the soke. It was in the County Court alone that the sheriff could legally summon the lesser baronage to attend the Great Council, and it was in the actual constitution of this assembly that the Crown found a solution of the difficulty which we have already stated. For the principle of representation by which it was finally solved was coeval with the Shire Court itself. In all cases of civil or criminal justice the twelve sworn assessors of the sheriff, as members of a class, though not formally deputed for that purpose, practically represented the judicial opinion of the county at large. From every hundred came groups of twelve sworn deputies, the "jurors," through whom the presentments of the district were made to the royal officer, and with whom the assessment of its share in the general taxation was arranged. The husbandmen on the outskirts of the crowd, clad in the brown smock-frock which still lingers in the garb of our carters and plowmen, were broken up into little knots of five, a reeve and four assistants, who formed the representatives of the rural townships. If, in fact, we regard the Shire Courts as lineally the descendants of our earliest English folkmotes, we may justly claim the principle of parliamentary representation as among the oldest of our institutions. But it was only slowly and tentatively that this principle was applied to the reconstitution of the Great Council. As early as the close of John's reign there are indications of the approaching change in the summons of "four discreet knights" from every county. Fresh need of local support was felt by both parties in the conflict of the succeeding reign, and Henry and his barons alike summoned knights from each shire "to meet on the common business of the realm." It was no doubt with the same purpose that the writs of Earl Simon ordered the choice of knights in each shire for his famous Parliament of 1265. Something like a continuous attendance may be dated from the accession of Edward, but it was long before the knights were regarded as more than local deputies for the assessment of taxation, or admitted to a share in the general business of the Great Council. The Statute "Quia Emptores," for instance, was passed in it before the knights who had been summoned could attend. Their participation in the deliber-

ative power of Parliament, as well as their regular and continuous attendance, dates only from the Parliament of 1295. But a far greater constitutional change in their position had already taken place through the extension of electoral rights to the freeholders at large. The one class entitled to a seat in the Great Council was, as we have seen, that of the lesser baronage; and of the lesser baronage alone the knights were in theory the representatives. But the necessity of holding their election in the County Court rendered any restriction of the electoral body physically impossible. The court was composed of the whole body of freeholders, and no sheriff could distinguish the "aye, aye" of the yeoman from the "aye, aye" of the lesser baron. From the first moment, therefore, of their attendance we find the knights regarded not as mere representatives of the baronage, but as knights of the shire, and by this silent revolution the whole body of the rural freeholders were admitted to a share in the government of the realm.

The financial difficulties of the Crown led to a far more radical revolution in the admission into the Great Council of representatives from the boroughs. The presence of knights from each shire was, as we have seen, the recognition of an older right, but no right of attendance or share in the national "counsel and consent" could be pleaded for the burgesses of the towns. On the other hand, the rapid development of their wealth made them every day more important as elements in the national taxation. The towns had long since freed themselves from all payment of the dues or fines exacted by the king as the original lord of the soil on which they had in most cases grown up, by what was called the purchase of the "farm of the borough"; in other words, by the commutation of these uncertain dues for a fixed sum paid annually to the Crown, and apportioned by their own magistrates among the general body of the burghers. All that the king legally retained was the right enjoyed by every great proprietor of levying a corresponding taxation on his tenants in demesne under the name of "a free aid," whenever a grant was made for the national necessities by the barons of the Great Council. But the temptation of appropriating the growing wealth of the mercantile class proved stronger than legal restrictions,

and we find both Henry the Third and his son assuming a right of imposing taxes at pleasure and without any authority from the council even over London itself. The burgesses could refuse indeed the invitation to contribute to the "free aid" demanded by the royal officers, but the suspension of their markets or trading privileges brought them in the end to submission. Each of these "free aids," however, had to be extorted after a long wrangle between the borough and the officers of the Exchequer; and if the towns were driven to comply with what they considered an extortion, they could generally force the Crown by evasions and delays to a compromise and abatement of its original demands. The same financial reasons, therefore, existed for desiring the presence of their representatives in the Great Council as existed in the case of the shires; but it was the genius of Earl Simon which first broke through the older constitutional tradition, and dared to summon two burgesses from each town to the Parliament of 1265. Time had, indeed, to pass before the large and statesmanlike conception of the great patriot could meet with full acceptance. Through the earlier part of Edward's reign we find a few instances of the presence of representatives from the towns, but their scanty numbers and the irregularity of their attendance show that they were summoned rather to afford financial information to the Great Council than as representatives in it of an estate of the realm. But every year pleaded stronger and stronger for their inclusion, and in the Parliament of 1295 that of 1265 found itself at last reproduced. "It was from me that he learnt it," Earl Simon had cried, as he recognized the military skill of Edward's onset at Evesham; "it was from me that he learnt it," his spirit might have exclaimed, as he saw the king gathering at last two burgesses "from every city, borough, and leading town" within his realm to sit side by side with the knights, nobles, and barons of the Great Council. To the Crown the change was from the first an advantageous one. The grants of subsidies by the burgesses in Parliament proved more profitable than the previous extortions of the Exchequer. The proportion of their grant generally exceeded that of the other estates by a tenth. Their representatives, too, proved far more compliant with the royal will than the

barons or knights of the shire; only on one occasion during Edward's reign did the burgesses waver from their general support of the Crown. It was easy, indeed, to control them, for the selection of boroughs to be represented remained wholly in the king's hands, and their numbers could be increased or diminished at the king's pleasure. The determination was left to the sheriff, and at a hint from the royal council a sheriff of Wilts would cut down the number of represented boroughs in his shire from eleven to three, or a sheriff of Bucks declare he could find but a single borough, that of Wycomb, within the bounds of the county. Nor was this exercise of the prerogative hampered by any anxiety on the part of the towns to claim representative privileges. It was difficult to suspect that a power before which the Crown would have to bow lay in the ranks of soberly clad traders, summoned only to assess the contributions of their boroughs, and whose attendance was as difficult to secure as it seemed burdensome to themselves and the towns who sent them. The mass of citizens took little or no part in their choice, for they were elected in the County Court by a few of the principal burghers deputed for the purpose; but the cost of their maintenance, the two shillings a day paid to the burgess by his town, as four were paid to the knight by his county, was a burden from which the boroughs made desperate efforts to escape. Some persisted in making no return to the sheriff. Some bought charters of exemption from the troublesome privilege. Of the 165 who were summoned by Edward the First more than a third ceased to send representatives after a single compliance with the royal summons. During the whole time from the reign of Edward the Third to the reign of Henry the Sixth the sheriff of Lancashire declined to return the names of any boroughs at all within that county "on account of their poverty." Nor were the representatives themselves more anxious to appear than their boroughs to send them. The busy country squire and the thrifty trader were equally reluctant to undergo the trouble and expense of a journey to Westminster. Legal measures were often necessary to insure their presence. Writs still exist in abundance such as that by which Walter le Rous is "held to bail in eight oxen and four cart-horses to come before the king on

the day specified" for attendance in Parliament. But in spite of obstacles such as these the presence of representatives from the boroughs may be regarded as continuous from the Parliament of 1295. As the representation of the lesser barons had widened through a silent change into that of the shire, so that of the boroughs — restricted in theory to those in royal demesne — seems practically from Edward's time to have been extended to all who were in a condition to pay the cost of their representatives' support. By a change as silent within the Parliament itself the burgess, originally summoned to take part only in matters of taxation, was at last admitted to a full share in the deliberations and authority of the other orders of the State.

The admission of the burgesses and knights of the shire to the assembly of 1295 completed the fabric of our representative constitution. The Great Council of the Barons had become the Parliament of the Realm, a parliament in which every order of the State found itself represented, and took part in the grant of supplies, the work of legislation, and in the end the control of government. But though in all essential points the character of Parliament has remained the same from that time to this, there were some remarkable particulars in which this assembly of 1295 differed widely from the present Parliament at St. Stephen's. Some of these differences, such as those which sprang from the increased powers and changed relations of the different orders among themselves, we shall have occasion to consider at a later time. But a difference of a far more startling kind than these lay in the presence of the clergy. If there is any part in the Parliamentary scheme of Edward the First which can be regarded as especially his own, it is his project for the representation of the ecclesiastical order. The king had twice at least summoned its "proctors" to Great Councils before 1295, but it was then only that the complete representation of the Church was definitely organized by the insertion of a clause in the writ which summoned a bishop to Parliament requiring the personal attendance of all archdeacons, deans, or priors of cathedral churches, of a proctor for each cathedral chapter, and two for the clergy within his diocese. The clause is repeated in the writs of

the present day, but its practical effect was foiled almost from the first by the resolute opposition of those to whom it was addressed. What the towns failed in doing the clergy actually did. Even when forced to comply with the royal summons, as they seem to have been forced during Edward's reign, they sat jealously by themselves, and their refusal to vote supplies in any but their own provincial assemblies, or convocations, of Canterbury and York left the Crown without a motive for insisting on their continued attendance. Their presence indeed, though still occasionally granted on some solemn occasions, became so pure a formality that by the end of the fifteenth century it had sunk wholly into desuetude. In their anxiety to preserve their existence as an isolated and privileged order the clergy flung away a power which, had they retained it, would have ruinously hampered the healthy development of the State. To take a single instance, it is difficult to see how the great changes of the Reformation could have been brought about had a good half of the House of Commons consisted purely of churchmen, whose numbers would have been backed by the weight of property as possessors of a third of the landed estates of the realm. A hardly less important difference may be found in the gradual restriction of the meetings of Parliament to Westminster. The names of the early statutes remind us of its convocation at the most various quarters, at Winchester, Acton Burnell, or Northampton. It was at a later time that Parliament became settled in the straggling village which had grown up in the marshy swamp of the Isle of Thorns, beside the palace whose embattled pile towered over the Thames and the great minster which was still rising in Edward's day on the site of the older church of the Confessor. It is possible that, while contributing greatly to its constitutional importance, this settlement of the Parliament may have helped to throw into the background its character as a supreme court of appeal. The proclamation by which it was called together invited "all who had any grace to demand of the king in Parliament, or any plaint to make of matters which could not be redressed or determined by ordinary course of law, or who had been in any way aggrieved by any of the king's ministers or justices or sheriffs, or their bailiffs,

or any other officer, or have been unduly assessed, rated, charged, or surcharged to aids, subsidies, or taxes," to deliver their petitions to receivers who sat in the Great Hall of the Palace of Westminster. The petitions were forwarded to the King's Council, and it was probably the extension of the jurisdiction of that body, and the subsequent rise of the Court of Chancery, which reduced this ancient right of the subject to the formal election of "Triers of Petitions" at the opening of every new Parliament by the House of Lords, a usage which is still continued. But it must have been owing to some memory of the older custom that the subject always looked for redress against injuries from the Crown or its ministers to the Parliament of the realm.

Section III. — The Conquest of Scotland, 1290—1305

The personal character of Edward the First had borne a large part in the constitutional changes which we have described, but it becomes of the highest moment during the war with Scotland which covers the latter half of his reign.

In his own time, and amongst his own subjects, Edward was the object of almost boundless admiration. He was in the truest sense a national king. At the moment when the last trace of foreign conquest passed away, when the descendants of those who won and those who lost at Senlac blended forever into an English people, England saw in her ruler no stranger, but an Englishman. The national tradition returned in more than the golden hair or the English name which linked him to our earlier kings. Edward's very temper was English to the core. In good as in evil he stands out as the typical representative of the race he ruled, like them wilful and imperious, tenacious of his rights, indomitable in his pride, dogged, stubborn, slow of apprehension, narrow in sympathy, but like them, too, just in the main, unselfish, laborious, conscientious, haughtily observant of truth and self-respect, temperate, reverent of duty, religious. He inherited indeed from the Angevins their fierce and passionate wrath; his punishments, when he punished in anger, were without pity; and a priest who ventured at a moment of storm into his presence with a remonstrance dropped dead from sheer fright at his

feet. But for the most part his impulses were generous, trustful, averse from cruelty, prone to forgiveness. "No man ever asked mercy of me," he said in his old age, "and was refused." The rough soldierly nobleness of his nature breaks out at Falkirk, where he lay on the bare ground among his men, or in his refusal during a Welsh campaign to drink of the one cask of wine which had been saved from marauders: "It is I who have brought you into this strait," he said to his thirsty fellow soldiers, "and I will have no advantage of you in meat or drink." A strange tenderness and sensitiveness to affection lay in fact beneath the stern imperiousness of his outer bearing. Every subject throughout his realm was drawn closer to the king who wept bitterly at the news of his father's death though it gave him a crown; whose fiercest burst of vengeance was called out by an insult to his mother; whose crosses rose as memorials of his love and sorrow at every spot where his wife's bier rested. "I loved her tenderly in her lifetime," wrote Edward to Eleanor's friend, the Abbot of Cluny; "I do not cease to love her now she is dead." And as it was with mother and wife, so it was with his people at large. All the self-concentrated isolation of the earlier Angevins disappears in Edward. He was the first English king since the Conquest who loved his people with a personal love, and craved for their love back again. To his trust in them we owe our Parliament, to his care for them the great statutes which stand in the forefront of our laws. Even in his struggles with her England understood a temper which was so perfectly her own, and the quarrels between king and people during his reign are quarrels where, doggedly as they fought, neither disputant doubted for a moment the worth or affection of the other. Few scenes in our history are more touching than that which closes the long contest over the charter, when Edward stood face to face with his people in Westminster Hall and with a sudden burst of tears owned himself frankly in the wrong.

But it was just this sensitiveness, this openness to outer impressions and outer influences, that led to the strange contradictions which meet us in Edward's career. Under the first king whose temper was distinctly English a foreign influence told most fatally on our manners, our literature, our

national spirit. The rise of France into a compact and organized monarchy from the time of Philip Augustus was now making its influence dominant in Western Europe. The "chivalry" so familiar in Froissart, that picturesque mimicry of high sentiment, of heroism, love, and courtesy, before which all depth and reality of nobleness disappeared to make room for the coarsest profligacy, the narrowest caste-spirit, and a brutal indifference to human suffering, was specially of French creation. There was a nobleness in Edward's nature from which the baser influences of this chivalry fell away. His life was pure, his piety, save when it stooped to the superstition of the time, manly and sincere, while his high sense of duty saved him from the frivolous self-indulgence of his successors. But he was far from being wholly free from the taint of his age. His passionate desire was to be a model of the fashionable chivalry of his day. He had been famous from his very youth as a consummate general; Earl Simon had admired the skill of his advance at Evesham, and in his Welsh campaign he had shown a tenacity and force of will which wrested victory out of the midst of defeat. He could head a furious charge of horse at Lewes, or organize a commissariat which enabled him to move army after army across the harried lowlands. In his old age he was quick to discover the value of the English archery, and to employ it as a means of victory at Falkirk. But his fame as a general seemed a small thing to Edward when compared with his fame as a knight. He shared to the full his people's love of hard fighting. His frame, indeed, was that of a born soldier — tall, deep-chested, long of limb, capable alike of endurance or action. When he encountered Adam Gurdon, a knight of gigantic size and renowned prowess, after Evesham, he forced him single-handed to beg for mercy. At the opening of his reign he saved his life by sheer fighting in a tournament at Challon. It was this love of adventure which lent itself to the frivolous unreality of the new chivalry. At his "Round Table of Kenilworth" a hundred lords and ladies, "clad all in silk," renewed the faded glories of Arthur's Court. The false air of romance which was soon to turn the gravest political resolutions into outbursts of sentimental feeling appeared in his "Vow of the Swan," when rising at the royal board he

swore on the dish before him to avenge on Scotland the murder of Comyn. Chivalry exerted on him a yet more fatal influence in its narrowing of his sympathy to the noble class, and in its exclusion of the peasant and the craftsman from all claim to pity. "Knight without reproach" as he was, he looked calmly on at the massacre of the burghers of Berwick, and saw in William Wallace nothing but a common robber.

Hardly less powerful than the French notion of chivalry in its influence on Edward's mind was the new French conception of kingship, feudality, and law. The rise of a lawyer class was everywhere hardening customary into written rights, allegiance into subjection, loose ties such as commendation into a definite vassalage. But it was specially through French influence, the influence of St. Louis and his successors, that the imperial theories of the Roman Law were brought to bear upon this natural tendency of the time. When the "sacred majesty" of the Cæsars was transferred by a legal fiction to the royal head of a feudal baronage, every constitutional relation was changed. The "defiance" by which a vassal renounced service to his lord became treason, his after resistance "sacrilege." That Edward could appreciate what was sound and noble in the legal spirit around him was shown in his reforms of our judicature and our Parliament; but there was something as congenial to his mind in its definiteness, its rigidity, its narrow technicalities. He was never wilfully unjust, but he was too often captious in his justice, fond of legal chicanery, prompt to take advantage of the letter of the law. The high conception of royalty which he had borrowed from St. Louis united with this legal turn of mind in the worst acts of his reign. Of rights or liberties unregistered in charter or roll Edward would know nothing, while his own good sense was overpowered by the majesty of his crown. It was incredible to him that Scotland should revolt against a legal bargain which made her national independence conditional on the terms extorted from a claimant of her throne; nor could he view in any other light but as treason the resistance of his own baronage to an arbitrary taxation which their fathers had borne. It is in the very anomalies of such a character, in its strange union of justice and wrong-doing, of nobleness and

meanness, that we must look for any fair explanation of much that has since been bitterly blamed in Edward's conduct and policy.

Fairly to understand his quarrel with the Scots, we must clear our minds of the ideas which we now associate with the words "Scotland," or the "Scotch people." At the opening of the fourteenth century the kingdom of the Scots was composed of four districts, each of which had originally its different people, its different speech, or at least dialect, and its different history. The first of these was the Lowland district, at one time called Saxony, and which now bears the name of Lothian and the Merse (or border-land), the space, roughly speaking, between the Forth and Tweed. We have seen that at the close of the English conquest of Britain the kingdom of Northumbria stretched from the Humber to the Firth of Forth, and of this kingdom the Lowlands formed simply the northern portion. The English conquest and the English colonization were as complete here as over the rest of Britain. Rivers and hills indeed retained their Celtic names, but the "tons" and "hams" scattered over the country told the story of its Teutonic settlement. Livings and Dodings left their names to Livingstone and Duddingstone; Elphinstone, Dolphinstone, and Edmundstone preserved the memory of English Elphins, Dolphins, and Edmunds who had raised their homesteads beyond the Teviot and the Tweed. To the northward and westward of this Northumbrian land lay the kingdoms of the conquered. Over the "Waste" or "Desert" — the range of barren moors which stretches from Derbyshire to the Cheviots — the Briton had sought a refuge in the long strip of coast between the Clyde and the Dee which formed the earlier Cumbria. Against this kingdom the efforts of the Northumbrian rulers had been incessantly directed; the victory of Chester had severed it from the Welsh kingdoms to the south; Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland were already subdued by the time of Ecgfrith; while the fragment which was suffered to remain unconquered between the firths of Solway and of Clyde, and to which the name of Cumbria is in its later use confined, owned the English supremacy. At the close of the seventh century it seemed likely that the same supremacy would extend over the Celtic tribes to the north. The

district north of the Clyde and Forth was originally inhabited chiefly by the Picts, a Latin name for the people who seem to have called themselves the Cruithne. To these Highlanders the country south of the Forth was a foreign land, and significant entries in their rude chronicles tell us how in their forays "the Picts made a raid upon Saxony." But during the period of Northumbrian greatness they had begun to yield, at least on their borders, some kind of submission to its kings. Eadwine had built a fort at Dunedin, which became Edinburgh and looked menacingly across the Forth; and at Abercorn beside it was established an English prelate with the title of Bishop of the Picts. Ecgfrith, in whose hands the power of Northumbria reached its highest point, marched across the Forth to change this overlordship into a direct dominion, and to bring the series of English victories to a close. His host poured burning and ravaging across the Tay, and skirted the base of the Grampians as far as the field of Nectansmere, where King Bruidi awaited them at the head of the Picts. The great battle which followed proved a turning-point in the history of the north; the invaders were cut to pieces, Ecgfrith himself being among the slain, and the power of Northumbria was broken forever. On the other hand, the kingdom of the Picts started into new life with its great victory, and pushed its way in the hundred years that followed westward, eastward, and southward, till the whole country north of the Forth and the Clyde acknowledged its supremacy. But the hour of Pictish greatness was marked by the sudden extinction of the Pictish name. Centuries before, when the English invaders were beginning to harry the south coast of Britain, a fleet of coracles had borne a tribe of the Scots, as the inhabitants of Ireland were at that time called, from the black cliff walls of Antrim to the rocky and indented coast of South Argyle. The little kingdom of Scot-land which these Irishmen founded slumbered in obscurity among the lakes and mountains to the south of Loch Linnhe, now submitting to the overlordship of Northumbria, now to that of the Picts, till the extinction of the direct Pictish line of sovereigns raised the Scot king, Kenneth Mac-Alpin, who chanced to be their nearest kinsman, to the vacant throne. For fifty years these rulers of Scottish blood still call them-

selves "Kings of the Picts"; but with the opening of the tenth century the very name passes away, the tribe which had given its chief to the common throne gives its designation to the common realm, and "Pict-land" vanishes from the page of the chronicler or annalist to make way for the "land of the Scots."

It was even longer before the change made way among the people itself, and the real union of the nation with its kings was only effected by the common suffering of the Danish wars. In the north, as in the south of Britain, the invasion of the Danes brought about political unity. Not only were Picts and Scots thoroughly blended into a single people, but by the annexation of Cumbria and the Lowlands, their monarchs became rulers of the territory which we now call Scotland. The annexation was owing to the new policy of the English kings. Their aim, after the long struggle of England with the Northmen, was no longer to crush the kingdom across the Forth, but to raise it into a bulwark against the Northmen who were still settled in Caithness and the Orkneys, and for whose aggressions Scotland was the natural highway. On the other hand, it was only in English aid that the Scot kings could find a support for their throne against these Norse Jarls of Orkney and Caithness. It was probably this common hostility to a common foe which brought about the "commendation" by which the Scots beyond the Forth, with the Welsh of Strathclyde, chose the English king, Eadward the Elder, "to father and lord." The choice, whatever weight after events may have given to it, seems to have been little more than the renewal of the loose English supremacy over the tribes of the north which had existed during the times of Northumbrian greatness; it certainly implied at the time nothing save a right on either side to military aid, though the aid then rendered was necessarily placed in the hands of the stronger party to the agreement. Such a connection naturally ceased in the event of any war between the two contracting parties; it was in fact by no means the feudal vassalage of a later time, but rather a military convention. But loose as was the tie which bound the two countries, a closer tie soon bound the Scot king himself to his English overlord. Strathclyde, which after the

defeat of Nectansmere had shaken off the English yoke, and which at a later time had owned the supremacy of the Scots, rose into a temporary independence only to be conquered by the English Eadmund. By him it was granted to Malcolm of Scotland on condition that he should become his "fellow worker" both by land and sea, and became from that time the appanage of the eldest son of the Scottish king. At a later time, under Eadgar or Cnut, the whole of Northern Northumbria, or what we now call the Lothians, was ceded to the Scottish sovereigns, but whether on the same terms of feudal dependence or on the same loose terms of "commendation" as already existed for lands north of the Forth, we have no means of deciding. The retreat, however, of the bounds of the great English bishopric of the north, the see of St. Cuthbert, as far southward as the Pentland Hills would seem to imply a greater change in the political character of the ceded district than the first theory would allow.

Whatever change these cessions may have brought about in the relation of the Scottish to the English kings, they certainly affected in a very marked way their relation both to England and to their own realm. One result of the acquisition of the Lowlands was the ultimate fixing of the royal residence in their new southern dominion at Edinburgh; and the English civilization with which they were then surrounded changed the Scot kings in all but blood into Englishmen. A way soon opened itself to the English Crown by the marriage of Malcolm with Margaret, the sister of Eadgar Æthel-ing. Their children were regarded by a large party within England as representatives of the older royal race and as claimants of the throne, and this danger grew as William's devastation of the north not only drove fresh multitudes of Englishmen to settle in the Lowlands, but filled the Scotch court with English nobles who fled thither for refuge. So formidable, indeed, became the pretensions of the Scot kings, that they forced the ablest of our Norman sovereigns into a complete change of policy. The Conqueror and William the Red had met the threats of the Scot sovereigns by invasions which ended again and again in an illusory homage; but the marriage of Henry the First with the Scottish Matilda not only robbed the claims of the Scottish line of much of their

force, but enabled him to draw it into far closer relations with the Norman throne. King David not only abandoned the ambitious dreams of his predecessors to place himself later at the head of his niece Matilda's party in her contest with Stephen, but as Henry's brother-in-law he figured as the first noble of the English court, and found English models and English support in the work of organization which he attempted within his own dominions. As the marriage with Margaret had changed Malcolm from a Celtic chieftain into an English king, so that of Matilda converted David into a Norman and feudal sovereign. His court was filled with Norman nobles from the south, such as the Balliols and Bruces, who were destined to play so great a part afterwards but who now for the first time obtained fiefs in the Scottish realm; and a feudal jurisprudence modeled on that of England was introduced into the Lowlands. A fresh connection between the countries began with the grant of lordships in England to the Scot kings or their sons. Homage was sometimes rendered, whether for these lordships, for the Lowlands, or for the whole Scottish realm, but it was the capture of William the Lion during the revolt of the English baronage which suggested to Henry the Second the project of a closer dependence of Scotland on the English Crown. To gain his freedom, William consented to hold his crown of Henry and his heirs, the prelates and lords of the Scotch kingdom did homage to Henry as to their direct lord, and a right of appeal in all Scotch causes was allowed to the superior court of the English suzerain. From this bondage, however, Scotland was soon freed by the prodigality of Richard, who allowed her to buy back the freedom she had forfeited, and from that time the difficulties of the older claim were evaded by a legal compromise. The Scot kings repeatedly did homage to the English sovereign, but with a reservation of rights which were prudently left unspecified. The English king accepted the homage on the assumption that it was rendered to him as overlord of the Scottish realm, and this assumption was neither granted nor denied. For nearly a hundred years the relations of the two countries were thus kept peaceful and friendly, and the death of Alexander the Third seemed destined to remove even the necessity of protests by a closer

union of the two kingdoms. Alexander had wedded his only daughter to the king of Norway, and after long negotiation the Scotch Parliament proposed the marriage of her child Margaret, "the Maid of Norway," with the son of Edward the First. It was, however, carefully provided in the marriage treaty of Brigham that Scotland should remain a separate and free kingdom, and that its laws and customs should be preserved inviolate. No military aid was to be claimed by the English king, no Scotch appeal to be carried to an English court. But this project was abruptly frustrated by the child's death on her voyage to Scotland, and with the rise of claimant after claimant of the vacant throne Edward was drawn into far other relations to the Scottish realm.

Of the thirteen pretenders to the throne of Scotland, only three could be regarded as serious claimants. By the extinction of the line of William the Lion the right of succession passed to the daughters of his brother David. The claim of John Balliol, Lord of Galloway, rested on his descent from the eldest of these; that of Robert Bruce, Lord of Annandale, on his descent from the second; that of John Hastings, Lord of Abergavenny, on his descent from the third. At this crisis the Norwegian king, the primate of St. Andrew's, and seven of the Scotch earls, had already appealed to Edward before Margaret's death; and the death itself was followed by the consent both of the claimants and the Council of Regency to refer the question of the succession to his decision in a Parliament at Norham. But the overlordship which the Scots acknowledged was something far less direct and definite than what Edward claimed at the opening of this conference. His claim was supported by excerpts from English monastic chronicles, and by the slow advance of an English army, while the Scotch lords, taken by surprise, found little help in the delay which was granted them, and at last, in common with nine of the claimants themselves, formally admitted Edward's direct suzerainty. To the nobles, in fact, the concession must have seemed a small one, for like the principal claimants they were for the most part Norman in blood, with estates in both countries, and looking for honors and pensions from the English court. From the commons who were gathered with the nobles at Norham no admission

of Edward's claims could be extorted; but in Scotland, feudalized as it had been by David, the commons were as yet of little weight, and their opposition was quietly passed by. All the rights of a feudal suzerain were at once assumed by the English king; he entered into the possession of the country as into that of a disputed fief to be held by its overlord till the dispute was settled, his peace was sworn throughout the land, its castles delivered into his charge, while its bishops and nobles swore homage to him directly as their lord superior. Scotland was thus reduced to the subjection which she had experienced under Henry the Second, but the full discussion which followed over the various claims to the throne showed that, while exacting to the full what he believed to be his right, Edward desired to do justice to the country itself. The commissioners whom he named to report on the claims to the throne were mainly Scotch; a proposal for the partition of the realm among the claimants was rejected as contrary to Scotch law; and the claim of Balliol as representative of the elder branch was finally preferred to that of his rivals.

The castles were at once delivered to the new monarch, and Balliol did homage to Edward with full acknowledgment of the services due to him from the realm of Scotland. For a time there was peace. Edward in fact seemed to have no desire to push farther the rights of his Crown. Even allowing that Scotland was a dependent kingdom, it was far from being an ordinary fief of the English Crown. By feudal custom a distinction had always been held to exist between the relations of a dependent king to a superior lord and those of a vassal noble to his sovereign. At Balliol's homage Edward had disclaimed, in strict accordance with the marriage treaty of Brigham, any right to the ordinary incidents of a fief, those of wardship or marriage; but there were other customs of the realm of Scotland as incontestable as these. The Scot king had never been held bound to attend the council of the English baronage, to do service in English warfare, or to contribute on the part of his Scotch realm to English aids. No express acknowledgment of these rights had been given by Edward, but for a time they were practically observed. The claim of independent justice was more doubtful, as it was of

higher import than these. It was certain that no appeal from a Scotch king's court to that of his supposed overlord had been allowed since the days of William the Lion, and the judicial independence of Scotland had been expressly reserved in the marriage treaty. But in feudal jurisprudence the right of ultimate appeal was the test of sovereignty. This right of appeal Edward now determined to enforce, and Balliol at first gave way. It was alleged, however, that the resentment of his baronage and people forced him to resist; and while appearing formally at Westminster he refused to answer an appeal save by advice of his council. He was in fact looking to France, which, as we shall afterwards see, was jealously watching Edward's proceedings, and ready to force him into war. By a new breach of customary law Edward summoned the Scotch nobles to follow him in arms against this foreign foe. But the summons was disregarded, and a second and formal refusal of aid was followed by a secret alliance with France and by a papal absolution of Balliol from his oath of fealty.

Edward was still reluctant to begin the war, when all hope of accommodation was ended by the refusal of Balliol to attend his Parliament at Newcastle, the rout of a small body of English troops, and the investment of Carlisle by the Scots. Orders were at once given for an advance upon Berwick. The taunts of its citizens stung the king to the quick. "Kynge Edward, waune thou havest Berwick, pike thee; waune thou havest geten, dike thee," they shouted from behind the wooden stockade which formed the only rampart of the town. But the stockade was stormed with the loss of a single knight, and nearly eight thousand of the citizens were mown down in a ruthless carnage, while a handful of Flemish traders who held the town hall stoutly against all assailants were burned alive in it. The massacre only ceased when a procession of priests bore the host to the king's presence, praying for mercy, and Edward with a sudden and characteristic burst of tears called off his troops; but the town was ruined forever, and the great merchant city of the north sank from that time into a petty seaport. At Berwick Edward received Balliol's defiance. "Has the fool done this folly?" the king cried in haughty scorn. "If he will not come to us, we will come to

him." The terrible slaughter, however, had done its work, and his march was a triumphal progress. Edinburgh, Stirling, and Perth opened their gates, Bruce joined the English army, and Balliol himself surrendered and passed without a blow from his throne to an English prison. No further punishment, however, was exacted from the prostrate realm. Edward simply treated it as a fief, and declared its forfeiture to be the legal consequence of Balliol's treason. It lapsed in fact to the overlord, and its earls, barons, and gentry swore homage in Parliament at Berwick to Edward as their king. The sacred stone on which its older sovereigns had been installed, an oblong block of sandstone, which legend asserted to have been the pillow of Jacob as angels ascended and descended upon him, was removed from Scone and placed in Westminster by the shrine of the Confessor. It was enclosed by Edward's order in a stately seat, which became from that hour the coronation chair of English kings.

To the king himself the whole business must have seemed another and easier conquest of Wales, and the mercy and just government which had followed his first success followed his second also. The government of the new dependency was entrusted to Warenne, Earl of Surrey, at the head of an English Council of Regency. Pardon was freely extended to all who had resisted the invasion, and order and public peace were rigidly enforced. But both the justice and injustice of the new rule proved fatal to it; the wrath of the Scots, already kindled by the intrusion of English priests into Scotch livings, and by the grant of lands across the border to English barons, was fanned to fury by the strict administration of law, and the repression of feuds and cattle-lifting. The disbanding, too, of troops, which was caused by the penury of the Royal Exchequer, united with the license of the soldiery who remained to quicken the national sense of wrong. The disgraceful submission of their leaders brought the people themselves to the front. In spite of a hundred years of peace the farmer of the Lowlands and the artisan of the towns remained stout-hearted Northumbrian Englishmen; they had never consented to Edward's supremacy, and their blood rose against the insolent rule of the stranger. The genius of an outlaw knight, William Wallace, saw in their

smoldering discontent a hope of freedom for his country, and his daring raids on outlying parties of the English soldiery roused the country at last into revolt. Of Wallace himself, of his life or temper, we know little or nothing; the very traditions of his gigantic stature and enormous strength are dim and unhistorical. But the instinct of the Scotch people has guided it aright in choosing Wallace for its national hero. He was the first to assert freedom as a national birthright, and amidst the despair of nobles and priests to call the people itself to arms. At the head of an army drawn principally from the coast districts north of the Tay, which were inhabited by a population of the same blood as that of the Lowlands, Wallace, in September, 1297, encamped near Stirling, the pass between the north and the south, and awaited the English advance. The offers of John of Warenne were scornfully rejected: "We have come," said the Scottish leader, "not to make peace, but to free our country." The position of Wallace, a rise of hills behind a loop of Forth, was in fact chosen with consummate skill. The one bridge which crossed the river was only broad enough to admit two horsemen abreast; and though the English army had been passing from daybreak, only half its force was across at noon when Wallace closed on it and cut it after a short combat to pieces in the sight of its comrades. The retreat of the Earl of Surrey over the border left Wallace head of the country he had freed, and for a time he acted as "Guardian of the Realm" in Balliol's name, and headed a wild foray into Northumberland. His reduction of Stirling Castle at last called Edward to the field. The king, who marched northward with a larger host than had ever followed his banner, was enabled by treachery to surprise Wallace, as he fell back to avoid an engagement, and to force him to battle near Falkirk. The Scotch force consisted almost wholly of foot, and Wallace drew up his spearmen in four great hollow circles or squares, the outer ranks kneeling, and the whole supported by bowmen within, while a small force of horse were drawn up as a reserve in the rear. It was the formation of Waterloo, the first appearance in our history since the day of Senlac of "that unconquerable British infantry," before which chivalry was destined to go down. For a moment it had all

Waterloo's success. "I have brought you to the ring, hop (dance) if you can," are words of rough humor that reveal the very soul of the patriot leader, and the serried ranks answered well to his appeal. The Bishop of Durham, who led the English van, shrank wisely from the look of the squares. "Back to your mass, Bishop," shouted the reckless knights behind him, but the body of horse dashed itself vainly on the wall of spears. Terror spread through the English army, and its Welsh auxiliaries drew off in a body from the field. But the generalship of Wallace was met by that of the king. Drawing his bowmen to the front, Edward riddled the Scottish ranks with arrows, and then hurled his cavalry afresh on the wavering line. In a moment all was over, and the maddened knights rode in and out of the broken ranks, slaying without mercy. Thousands fell on the field, and Wallace himself escaped with difficulty, followed by a handful of men. But ruined as the cause of freedom seemed, his work was done. He had roused Scotland into life, and even a defeat like Falkirk left her unconquered. Edward remained master only of the ground he stood on; want of supplies forced him to retreat; and in the following year a regency of Scotch nobles under Bruce and Comyn continued the struggle for independence. Troubles at home and dangers from abroad stayed Edward's hand. The barons were pressing more and more vigorously for redress of their grievances and the heavy taxation brought about by the war. France was still menacing, and a claim advanced by Pope Boniface the Eighth, at its suggestion, to the feudal superiority over Scotland, arrested a fresh advance of the king. A quarrel, however, which broke out between Philippe le Bel and the papacy removed all obstacles and enabled Edward to defy Boniface and to wring from France a treaty in which Scotland was abandoned. In 1304 he resumed the work of invasion, and again the nobles flung down their arms as he marched to the north. Comyn, at the head of the Regency, acknowledged his sovereignty, and the surrender of Stirling completed the conquest of Scotland. The triumph of Edward was but the prelude to the full execution of his designs for knitting the two countries together by a clemency and wisdom which reveal the greatness of his statesmanship. A general amnesty was extended to all who

had shared in the revolt. Wallace, who refused to avail himself of Edward's mercy, was captured, and condemned to death at Westminster on charges of treason, sacrilege, and robbery. The head of the great patriot, crowned in mockery with a circlet of laurel, was placed upon London Bridge. But the execution of Wallace was the one blot on Edward's clemency. With a masterly boldness he entrusted the government of the country to a council of Scotch nobles, many of whom were freshly pardoned for their share in the war, and anticipated the policy of Cromwell by allotting ten representatives to Scotland in the Common Parliament of his realm. A Convocation was summoned at Perth for the election of these representatives, and a great judicial scheme which was promulgated in this assembly adopted the amended laws of King David as the base of a new legislation, and divided the country for judicial purposes into four districts, Lothian, Galloway, the Highlands, and the land between the Highlands and the Forth, at the head of each of which were placed two justiciars, the one English and the other Scotch.

Section IV. — The English Towns

From scenes such as we have been describing, from the wrong and bloodshed of foreign conquest, we pass to the peaceful life and progress of England itself.

Through the reign of the three Edwards two revolutions, which have been almost ignored by our historians, were silently changing the whole character of English society. The first of these, the rise of a new class of tenant-farmers, we shall have to notice hereafter in its connection with the great agrarian revolt which bears the name of Wat Tyler. The second, the rise of the craftsmen within our towns, and the struggle by which they won power and privilege from the older burghers, is the most remarkable event in the period of our national history at which we have arrived.

The English borough was originally a mere township or group of townships whose inhabitants happened, either for purposes of trade or protection, to cluster together more thickly than elsewhere. It is this characteristic of our boroughs which separates them at once from the cities of Italy

and Provence, which had preserved the municipal institutions of their Roman past, from the German towns founded by Henry the Fowler with the special purpose of sheltering industry from the feudal oppression around them, or from the communes of Northern France, which sprang into existence in revolt against feudal outrage within their walls. But in England the tradition of Rome had utterly passed away, while feudal oppression was held fairly in check by the Crown. The English town, therefore, was in its beginning simply a piece of the general country, organized and governed precisely in the same manner as the townships around it. The burgh or borough was probably a more defensible place than the common village; it may have had a ditch or mound about it instead of the quickset hedge or "tun" from which the township took its name. But its constitution was simply that of the people at large. The obligations of the dwellers within its bounds were those of the townships round, to keep fence and trench in good repair, to send a contingent to the fyrd, and a reeve and four men to the hundred-court and shire court; and the inner rule of the borough lay as in the townships about in the hands of its own freemen, gathered in "borough mote" or "portmannimote." But the social change brought about by the Danish wars, the legal requirement that each man should have a lord, affected the towns, as it affected the rest of the country. Some passed into the hands of great thegns near to them; the bulk became known as in the demesne of the king. A new officer, the lord's or king's reeve, was a sign of this revolution. It was the reeve who now summoned the borough mote and administered justice in it; it was he who collected the lord's dues or annual rent of the town, and who exacted the services it owed to its lord. To modern eyes these services would imply almost complete subjection. When Leicester, for instance, passed from the hands of the Conqueror into those of its earls, its townsmen were bound to reap their lord's corn crops, to grind at his mill, to redeem their strayed cattle from his pound. The great forest around was the earl's, and it was only out of his grace that the little borough could drive its swine into the woods or pasture its cattle in the glades. The justice and government of the town lay wholly in its master's hands; he

appointed its bailiffs, received the fines and forfeitures of his tenants, and the fees and tolls of their markets and fairs. But when once these dues were paid and these services rendered the English townsman was practically free. His rights were as rigidly defined by custom as those of his lord. Property and person alike were secured against arbitrary seizure. He could demand a fair trial on any charge, and even if justice was administered by his master's reeve it was administered in the presence and with the assent of his fellow townsmen. The bell which swung out from the town tower gathered the burgesses to a common meeting, where they could exercise rights of free speeeh and free deliberation on their own affairs. Their merchant gild over its ale feast regulated trade, distributed the sums due from the town among the different burgesses, looked to the due repairs of gate and wall, and acted, in fact, pretty much the same part as a town council of to-day. Not only, too, were these rights secured by custom from the first, but they were constantly widening as time went on. Whenever we get a glimpse of the inner history of an English town, we find the same peaceful revolution in progress, services disappearing through disuse or omission, while privileges and immunities are being purchased in hard cash. The lord of the town, whether he were king, baron, or abbot, was commonly thriftless or poor, and the capture of a noble, or the campaign of a sovereign, or the building of some new minster by a prior, brought about an appeal to the thrifty burghers, who were ready to fill again their master's treasury at the price of the strip of parchment which gave them freedom of trade, of justice, and of government. Sometimes a chance story lights up for us this work of emancipation. At Leicester one of the chief aims of its burgesses was to regain their old English trial by compurgation, the rough predecessor of trial by jury, which had been abolished by the earls in favor of the foreign trial by battle. "It chanced," says a charter of the place, "that two kinsmen, Nicholas the son of Acon, and Geoffrey the son of Nicholas, waged a duel about a certain piece of land, concerning which a dispute had arisen between them; and they fought from the first to the ninth hour, each conquering by turns. Then one of them fleeing from the other till he came to a certain little pit, as he stood

on the brink of the pit, and was about to fall therein, his kinsman said to him 'Take care of the pit, turn back lest thou shouldest fall into it.' Thereat so much clamor and noise was made by the bystanders and those who were sitting around, that the Earl heard these clamors as far off as the castle, and he inquired of some how it was there was such a clamor, and answer was made to him that two kinsmen were fighting about a certain piece of ground, and that one had fled till he reached a certain little pit, and that as he stood over the pit and was about to fall into it the other warned him. Then the townsmen being moved with pity made a covenant with the earl that they should give him threepence yearly for each house in the High Street that had a gable, on condition that he should grant to them that the twenty-four jurors who were in Leicester from ancient times should from that time forward discuss and decide all pleas they might have among themselves." For the most part the liberties of our towns were bought in this way, by sheer hard bargaining. The earliest English charters, save that of London, date from the years when the treasury of Henry the First was drained by his Norman wars; and grants of municipal liberty made professedly by the Angevins are probably the result of their costly employment of mercenary troops. At the close, however, of the thirteenth century, this struggle for emancipation was nearly over. The larger towns had secured the administration of justice in their own borough-courts, the privilege of self-government, and the control of their own trade, and their liberties and charters served as models and incentives to the smaller communities which were struggling into life.

During the progress of this outer revolution, the inner life of the English town was in the same quiet and hardly conscious way developing itself from the common form of the life around it into a form especially its own. Within as without the ditch or stockade which formed the earliest boundary of the borough, land was from the first the test of freedom, and the possession of land was what constituted the townsman. We may take, perhaps, a foreign instance to illustrate this fundamental point in our municipal history. When Duke Berthold of Zahringen resolved to found Freiburg, his "free town," in the Brisgau, the mode

he adopted was to gather a group of traders together, and to give each man a plot of ground for his freehold round what was destined to be the market-place of the new community. In England the landless man who dwelt in a borough had no share in its corporate life; for purposes of government or property the town was simply an association of the landed proprietors within its bounds; nor was there anything in this association, as it originally existed, which could be considered peculiar or exceptional. The constitution of the English town, however different its form may have afterwards become, was at first simply that of the people at large. We have seen that among the German races society rested on the basis of the family, that it was the family who fought and settled side by side, and the kinsfolk who were bound together in ties of mutual responsibility to each other and to the law. As society became more complex and less stationary it necessarily outgrew these simple ties of blood, and in England this dissolution of the family bond seems to have taken place at the very time when Danish incursions and the growth of a feudal temper among the nobles rendered an isolated existence most perilous for the freeman. His only resource was to seek protection among his fellow freemen, and to replace the older brotherhood of the kinsfolk by a voluntary association of his neighbors for the same purposes of order and self-defense. The tendency to unite in such "frithgilds" or peace clubs became general throughout Europe during the ninth and tenth centuries, but on the Continent it was roughly met and repressed. The successors of Charles the Great enacted penalties of scourging, nose slitting, and banishment against voluntary unions, and even a league of the poor peasants of Gaul against the inroads of the Northmen was suppressed by the swords of the Frankish nobles. In England the attitude of the kings was utterly different. The system known at a later time as "frank-pledge," or free engagement of neighbor for neighbor, was accepted after the Danish wars as the base of social order. Ælfred recognized the common responsibility of the members of the "frithgild" side by side with that of the kinsfolk, and Æthelstan accepted "frithgilds" as a constituent element of borough life in the Dooms of London.

The frithgild, then, in the earlier English town, was pre-

cisely similar to the frithgilds which formed the basis of social order in the country at large. An oath of mutual fidelity among its members was substituted for the tie of blood, while the gild-feast held once a month in the common hall replaced the gathering of the kinsfolk round their family hearth. But within this new family the aim of the frithgild was to establish a mutual responsibility as close as that of the old. "Let all share the same lot," ran its law; "if any misdo, let all bear it." A member could look for aid from his gild-brothers in atoning for any guilt incurred by mishap. He could call on them for assistance in case of violence or wrong; if falsely accused, they appeared in court as his compurgators; if poor they supported, and when dead they buried him. On the other hand, he was responsible to them, as they were to the State, for order and obedience to the laws. A wrong of brother against brother was also a wrong against the general body of the gild, and was punished by fine, or in the last resort by expulsion, which left the offender a "lawless" man and an outcast. The one difference between these gilds in country and town was that in the latter case, from their close local neighborhood, they tended inevitably to coalesce. Under Æthelstan the London gilds united into one for the purpose of carrying out more effectually their common aims, and at a later time we find the gilds of Berwick enacting "that where many bodies are found side by side in one place they may become one, and have one will, and in the dealings of one with another have a strong and hearty love." The process was probably a long and difficult one, for the brotherhoods naturally differed much in social rank, and even after the union was effected we see traces of the separate existence to a certain extent of some one or more of the wealthier or more aristocratic gilds. In London, for instance, the Cnihten gild, which seems to have stood at the head of its fellows, retained for a long time its separate property, while its alderman — as the chief officer of each gild was called — became the alderman of the united gild of the whole city. In Canterbury we find a similar gild of thegns, from which the chief officers of the town seem commonly to have been selected. Imperfect, however, as the union might be, when once it was effected the town passed from a mere collection of brotherhoods into

a powerful and organized community, whose character was inevitably determined by the circumstances of its origin. In their beginnings our boroughs seem to have been mainly gatherings of persons engaged in agricultural pursuits; the first Dooms of London provide especially for the recovery of cattle belonging to the citizens. But as the increasing security of the country invited the farmer or the squire to settle apart in his own fields, and the growth of estate and trade told on the towns themselves, the difference between town and country became more sharply defined. London, of course, took the lead in this new development of civic life. Even in Æthelstan's day every London merchant who had made three long voyages on his own account ranked as a thegn. Its "lithsmen" or shipmen's gild were of sufficient importance under Harthacnut to figure in the election of a king, and its principal street still tells of the rapid growth of trade, in the name of "Cheapside" or the bargaining place. But at the Norman Conquest the commercial tendency had become universal. The name given to the united brotherhood is in almost every case no longer that of the "town gild," but of the "merchant gild."

This social change in the character of the townsmen produced important results in the character of their municipal institutions. In becoming a merchant gild the body of citizens who formed the "town" enlarged their powers of civic legislation by applying them to the control of their internal trade. It became their special business to obtain from the Crown or from their lords wider commercial privileges, rights of coinage, grants of fairs, and exemption from tolls; while within the town itself they framed regulations as to the sale and quality of goods, the control of markets, and the recovery of debts. A yet more important result sprang from the increase of population which the growth of wealth and industry brought with it. The mass of the new settlers, composed as they were of escaped serfs, of traders without landed holdings, of families who had lost their original lot in the borough, and generally of the artisans and the poor, had no part in the actual life of the town. The right of trade and of the regulation of trade, in common with all other forms of jurisdiction, lay wholly in the hands of the landed burghers whom we

have described. By a natural process, too, their superiority in wealth produced a fresh division between the "burghers" of the merchant gild and the unenfranchised mass around them. The same change which severed at Florence the seven Greater Arts or trades from the fourteen Lesser Arts, and which raised the three occupations of banking, the manufacture and the dyeing of cloth, to a position of superiority even within the privileged circle of the seven, told, though with less force, on the English boroughs. The burghers of the merchant gild gradually concentrated themselves on the greater operations of commerce, on trades which required a larger capital, while the meaner employments of general traffic were abandoned to their poorer neighbors. This advance in the division of labor is marked by such severances as we note in the thirteenth century, of the cloth merchant from the tailor, or the leather merchant from the butcher. But the result of this severance was all-important in its influence on the constitution of our towns. The members of the trades thus abandoned by the wealthier burghers formed themselves into craft gilds, which soon rose into dangerous rivalry with the original merchant gild of the town. A seven years' apprenticeship formed the necessary prelude to full membership of any trade gild. Their regulations were of the minutest character; the quality and value of work was rigidly prescribed, the hours of toil fixed "from daybreak to curfew," and strict provision made against competition in labor. At each meeting of these gilds their members gathered round the craft box, which contained the rules of their society, and stood with bared heads as it was opened. The warden and a quorum of gild-brothers formed a court which enforced the ordinances of the gild, inspected all work done by its members, confiscated unlawful tools or unworthy goods; and disobedience to their orders was punished by fines, or in the last resort by expulsion, which involved the loss of right to trade. A common fund was raised by contributions among the members, which not only provided for the trade objects of the gild, but sufficed to found chantries and masses, and set up painted windows in the church of their patron saint. Even at the present day the arms of the craft gild may often be seen blazoned in cathedrals side by side with those of prelates and of kings.

But it was only by slow degrees that they rose to such a height as this. The first steps in their existence were the most difficult, for to enable a trade gild to carry out its objects with any success, it was first necessary that the whole body of craftsmen belonging to the trade should be compelled to belong to it, and secondly that a legal control over the trade itself should be secured to it. A royal charter was indispensable for these purposes, and over the grant of these charters took place the first struggle with the merchant gild, which had till then solely exercised jurisdiction over trade within the boroughs. The weavers, who were the first trade gild to secure royal sanction in the reign of Henry the First, were still engaged in the contest for existence as late as the reign of John, when the citizens of London bought for a time the suppression of their gild. Even under the house of Lancaster, Exeter was engaged in resisting the establishment of a tailors' gild. From the eleventh century, however, the spread of these societies went steadily on, and the control of trade passed from the merchant gilds to the craft gilds.

It is this struggle, to use the technical terms of the time, of the "greater folk" against the "lesser folk" or of the "commune," the general mass of the inhabitants, against the "prudhommes" or "wiser" few, which brought about, as it passed from the regulation of trade to the general government of the town, the great civic revolution of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. On the Continent, and especially along the Rhine, the struggle was as fierce as the supremacy of the older burghers had been complete. In Köln the craftsmen had been reduced to all but serfage, and the merchant of Brussels might box at his will the ears of "the man without heart or honor who lives by his toil." Such social tyranny of class over class brought a century of bloodshed to the cities of Germany; but in England the tyranny of class over class had been restrained by the general tenor of the law, and the revolution took for the most part a milder form. The longest and bitterest strife of all was naturally at London. Nowhere had the territorial constitution struck root so deeply, and nowhere had the landed oligarchy risen to such a height of wealth and influence. The city was divided

into wards, each of which was governed by an alderman drawn from the ruling class. In some, indeed, the office seems to have become hereditary. The "magnates" or "barons" of the merchant gild advised alone on all matters of civic government or trade regulation, and distributed or assessed at their will the revenues or burdens of the town. Such a position afforded an opening for corruption and oppression of the most galling kind; and it seems to have been the general impression of the unfair assessment levied on the poor, and the undue burdens which were thrown on the unenfranchised classes, which provoked the first serious discontent. William of the Long Beard, himself one of the governing body, placed himself at the head of a conspiracy which numbered, in the terrified fancy of the burghers, fifty thousand of the craftsmen. His eloquence, his bold defiance of the aldermen in the town-mote, gained him at any rate a wide popularity, and the crowds who surrounded him hailed him as "the savior of the poor." One of his addresses is luckily preserved to us by a hearer of the time. In medieval fashion he began with a text from the Vulgate, "Ye shall draw water with joy from the fountain of the Savior." "I," he began, "am the savior of the poor. Ye poor men who have felt the weight of rich men's hands draw from my fountain waters of wholesome instruction and that with joy, for the time of your visitation is at hand. For I will divide the waters from the waters. It is the people who are the waters, and I will divide the lowly and faithful folk from the proud and faithless folk; I will part the chosen from the reprobate as light from darkness." But it was in vain that by appeals to the king he strove to win royal favor for the popular cause. The support of the moneyed classes was essential to Richard in the costly wars with Philip of France, and the justiciar, Archbishop Hubert, after a moment of hesitation, issued orders for his arrest. William felled with an ax the first soldier who advanced to seize him, and, taking refuge with a few followers in the tower of St. Mary-le-Bow, summoned his adherents to rise. Hubert, however, who had already flooded the city with troops, with bold contempt of the right of sanctuary set fire to the tower and forced William to surrender. A burgher's son, whose father he had

slain, stabbed him as he came forth, and with his death the quarrel slumbered for more than fifty years.

No further movement, in fact, took place till the outbreak of the Barons' war, but the city had all through the interval been seething with discontent; the unenfranchised craftsmen, under pretext of preserving the peace, had united in secret frithgilds of their own, and mobs rose from time to time to sack the houses of foreigners and the wealthier burghers. But it was not till the civil war began that the open contest recommenced. The craftsmen forced their way into the town-mote, and setting aside the aldermen and magnates, chose Thomas Fitz-Thomas for their mayor. Although dissension still raged during the reign of the second Edward, we may regard this election as marking the final victory of the craft gilds. Under his successor all contest seems to have ceased: charters had been granted to every trade, their ordinances formally recognized and enrolled in the mayor's court, and distinctive liveries assumed to which they owed the name of "Livery Companies" which they still retain. The wealthier citizens, who found their old power broken, regained influence by enrolling themselves as members of the trade gilds, and Edward the Third himself humored the current of civic feeling by becoming a member of the gild of Armorers. This event marks the time when the government of our towns had become more really popular than it ever again became till the Municipal Reform Act of our own days. It had passed from the hands of an oligarchy into those of the middle classes, and there was nothing as yet to foretell the reactionary revolution by which the trade gilds themselves became an oligarchy as narrow as that which they had deposed.

Section V. — The King and the Baronage, 1290–1327

If we turn again to the constitutional history of England from the accession of Edward the First, we find a progress not less real but checkered with darker vicissitudes than the progress of our towns. A great transfer of power had been brought about by the long struggle for the charter, by the reforms of Earl Simon, and by the earlier legislation of

Edward himself. His conception of kingship indeed was that of a just and religious Henry the Second, but his England was as different from the England of Henry as the Parliament of the one was different from the Great Council of the other. In the rough rhymes of Robert of Gloucester we read the simple political creed of the people at large:—

> "When the land through God's grace to good peace was brought,
> For to have the old laws the high men turned their thought:
> For to have, as we said erst, the good old law,
> The king made his charter and granted it with sawe."

But the power which the charter had wrested from the Crown fell not to the people but to the baronage. The farmer and the artisan, though they could fight in some great crisis for freedom, had as yet no wish to interfere in the common task of government. The vast industrial change in both town and country, which had begun during the reign of Henry the Third, and which continued with increasing force during that of his son, absorbed the energy and attention of the trading classes. In agriculture, the enclosure of common lands and the introduction of the system of leases on the part of the great proprietors, coupled with the subdivision of estates which was facilitated by Edward's legislation, was gradually creating out of the masses of rural bondsmen a new class of tenant-farmers, whose whole energy was absorbed in their own great rise to social freedom. The very causes which rendered the growth of municipal liberty so difficult increased the wealth of the towns. To the trade with Norway and the Hanse towns of North Germany, the wool trade with Flanders, and the wine trade with Gascony, was now added a fast increasing commerce with Italy and Spain. The great Venetian merchant galleys appeared on the English coast, Florentine traders settled in the southern ports, the bankers of Florence and Lucca followed those of Cahors, who had already dealt a death-blow to the usury of the Jews. But the wealth and industrial energy of the country was shown, not only in the rise of a capitalist class, but in a crowd of civil and ecclesiastical buildings which distinguished this period. Christian architecture reached its highest beauty in the opening of Edward's reign, a period marked by the com-

pletion of the abbey-church of Westminster and the exquisite cathedral-church at Salisbury. An English noble was proud to be styled "an incomparable builder," while some traces of the art which was rising across the Alps perhaps flowed in with the Italian ecclesiastics whom the papacy was forcing on the English Church. In the abbey of Westminster the shrine of the Confessor, the mosaic pavement, and the paintings on the walls of minster and chapter-house remind us of the schools which were springing up under Giotto and the Pisans.

But even had this industrial distraction been wanting, the trading classes had no mind to claim any direct part in the actual work of government. It was a work which, in default of the Crown, fell naturally, according to the ideas of the time, to the baronage. Constitutionally the position of the English nobles had now become established. A king could no longer make laws or levy taxes or even make war without their assent. And in the baronage the nation reposed an unwavering trust. The nobles of England were no more the brutal foreigners from whose violence the strong hand of a Norman ruler had been needed to protect his subjects; they were as English as the peasant or the trader. They had won English liberty by their swords, and the tradition of their order bound them to look on themselves as its natural guardians. At the close of the Barons' war, the problem which had so long troubled the realm, the problem of how to insure its government in accordance with the charter, was solved by the transfer of the business of administration into the hands of a standing committee of the greater prelates and barons, acting as chief officers of state in conjunction with specially appointed ministers of the Crown. The body thus composed was known as the Continual Council; and the quiet government of the kingdom by the council in the long interval between the death of Henry the Third and his son's return shows how effective this rule of the nobles was. It is significant of the new relation which they were to strive to establish between themselves and the Crown that in the brief which announced Edward's accession the council asserted that the new monarch mounted his throne "by the will of the peers." The very form indeed of the new Parliament, in which the barons were

backed by the knights of the shire, elected for the most part under their influence, and by the representatives of the towns, still true to the traditions of the Barons' war; the increased frequency of these parliamentary assemblies, which gave opportunity for counsel, for party organization, and a distinct political base of action; above all, the new financial power which their control over taxation enabled them to exert on the throne, ultimately placed the rule of the nobles on a basis too strong to be shaken by the utmost efforts of even Edward himself.

From the first the king struggled fruitlessly against this overpowering influence; and his sympathies must have been stirred by the revolution on the other side of the Channel, where the French kings were crushing the power of the feudal baronage, and erecting a royal despotism on its ruins. Edward watched jealously over the ground which the Crown had already gained against the nobles. Following the policy of Henry II., at the very outset of his reign he instituted a commission of inquiry into the judicial franchises still existing, and on its report itinerant justices were sent to discover by what right these franchises were held. The writs of "quo warranto" were roughly met here and there. Earl Warenne bared a rusty sword, and flung it on the justices' table. "This, sirs," he said, "is my warrant. By the sword our fathers won their lands when they came over with the Conqueror, and by the sword we will keep them." But the king was far from limiting himself to the plans of Henry II.; he aimed further at neutralizing the power of the nobles by raising the whole body of landowners to the same level; and a royal writ ordered all freeholders who held land of the value of twenty pounds to receive knighthood at the king's hands. While the political influence of the baronage as a leading element in the nation mounted, in fact, the personal and purely feudal power of each individual on his estates as steadily fell. The hold which the Crown had gained on every noble family by its rights of wardship and marriage, the circuits of the royal judges, the ever narrowing bounds within which baronial justice was circumscribed, the blow dealt by scutage at their military power, the prompt intervention of the council in their feuds, lowered the nobles more and more to the level of their

fellow subjects. Much yet remained to be done. Different as the English baronage, taken as a whole, was from a feudal *noblesse* like that of Germany or France, there is in every military class a natural drift towards violence and lawlessness, which even the stern justice of Edward found it difficult to repress. Throughout his reign his strong hand was needed to enforce order on warring nobles. Great earls, such as those of Gloucester and Hereford, carried on private war; in Shropshire the Earl of Arundel waged his feud with Fulk Fitz-Warine. To the lesser and poorer nobles the wealth of the trader, the long wain of goods as it passed along the highway, was a tempting prey. Once, under cover of a mock tournament of monks against canons, a band of country gentlemen succeeded in introducing themselves into the great merchant fair at Boston; at nightfall every booth was on fire, the merchants robbed and slaughtered, and the booty carried off to ships which lay ready at the quay. Streams of gold and silver, ran the tale of popular horror, flowed melted down the gutters to the sea; "all the money in England could hardly make good the loss." Even at the close of Edward's reign lawless bands of "trail bastons," or clubmen, maintained themselves by general outrage, aided the country nobles in their feuds, and wrested money and goods by threats from the great tradesmen. The king was strong enough to fine and imprison the earls, to hang the chief of the Boston marauders, and to suppress the outlaws by rigorous commissions. During Edward's absence of three years from the realm, the judges, who were themselves drawn from the lesser baronage, were charged with violence and corruption. After a careful investigation the judicial abuses were recognized and amended; two of the chief justices were banished from the country, and their colleagues imprisoned and fined.

The next year saw a step which remains the great blot upon Edward's reign. Under the Angevins the popular hatred of the Jews had grown rapidly in intensity. But the royal protection had never wavered. Henry the Second had granted them the right of burial outside of every city where they dwelt. Richard had punished heavily a massacre of the Jews at York, and organized a mixed court of Jews and Christians for the registration of their contracts. John

suffered none to plunder them save himself, though he once wrested from them a sum equal to a year's revenue of his realm. The troubles of the next reign brought in a harvest greater than even the royal greed could reap; the Jews grew wealthy enough to acquire estates, and only a burst of popular feeling prevented a legal decision which would have enabled them to own freeholds. Their pride and contempt of the superstitions around them broke out in the taunts they leveled at processions as they passed their Jewries, sometimes, as at Oxford, in actual attacks upon them. Wild stories floated about among the people of children carried off to Jewish houses, to be circumcised or crucified, and a boy of Lincoln who was found slain in a Jewish house was canonized by popular reverence as "St. Hugh." The first work of the friars was to settle in the Hebrew quarters and attempt their conversion, but the tide of popular fury rose too fast for these gentler means of reconciliation. When the Franciscans saved seventy Jews from death by their prayers to Henry the Third, the populace angrily refused the brethren alms. The sack of Jewry after Jewry was the sign of popular hatred during the Barons' war. With its close, fell on the Jews the more terrible persecution of the law. Statute after statute hemmed them in. They were forbidden to hold real property, to employ Christian servants, to move through the streets without the two white tablets of wool on their breasts which distinguished their race. They were prohibited from building new synagogues, or eating with Christians, or acting as physicians to them. Their trade, already crippled by the rivalry of the bankers of Cahors, was annihilated by a royal order which bade them renounce usury under pain of death. At last persecution could do no more, and on the eve of his struggle with Scotland, Edward, eager at the moment to find supplies for his treasury, and himself swayed by the fanaticism of his subjects, bought the grant of a fifteenth from clergy and laity by consenting to drive the Jews from his realm. Of the sixteen thousand who preferred exile to apostasy, few reached the shores of France. Many were wrecked, others robbed and flung overboard. One shipmaster turned out a crew of wealthy merchants on to a sand-bank, and bade them

call a new Moses to save them from the sea. From the time of Edward to that of Cromwell no Jew touched English ground.

No share in the enormities which accompanied the expulsion of the Jews can fall upon Edward, for he not only suffered the fugitives to take their wealth with them, but punished with the halter those who plundered them at sea. But the expulsion was none the less cruel, and the grant of a fifteenth made by the grateful Parliament proved but a poor substitute for the loss which the royal treasury had sustained. The Scotch war more than exhausted the aids granted by the Parliament. The treasury was utterly drained; the costly fight with the French in Gascony called for supplies, while the king was planning a yet costlier attack on Northern France with the aid of Flanders. It was sheer want which drove Edward to tyrannous extortion. His first blow fell on the Church; he had already demanded half their annual income from the clergy, and so terrible was his wrath at their resistance, that the dean of St. Paul's, who had stood forth to remonstrate, dropped dead of sheer terror at his feet. "If any oppose the king's demand," said a royal envoy, in the midst of the Convocation, "let him stand up that he may be noted as an enemy to the king's peace." The outraged churchmen fell back on an untenable plea that their aid was due solely to Rome, and pleaded a bull of exemption, issued by Pope Boniface VIII., as a ground for refusing to comply with further taxation. Edward met their refusal by a general outlawry of the whole order. The king's courts were closed, and all justice denied to those who refused the king aid. By their actual plea the clergy had put themselves formally in the wrong, and the outlawry soon forced them to submission, but their aid did little to recruit the exhausted treasury, while the pressure of the war steadily increased. Far wider measures of arbitrary taxation were needful to equip an expedition which Edward prepared to lead in person to Flanders. The country gentlemen were compelled to take up knighthood, or to compound for exemption from the burdensome honor. Forced contributions of cattle and corn were demanded from the counties, and the export duty on wool — now the staple produce of the country — was raised

to six times its former amount. Though he infringed no positive charter or statute, the work of the Great Charter and the Barons' war seemed suddenly to have been undone. But the blow had no sooner been struck than Edward found himself powerless within his realm. The baronage roused itself to resistance, and the two greatest of the English nobles, Bohun, Earl of Hereford, and Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, placed themselves at the head of the opposition. Their protest against the war and the financial measures by which it was carried on took the practical form of a refusal to lead a force to Gascony as Edward's lieutenants, while he himself sailed for Flanders. They availed themselves of the plea that they were not bound to foreign service save in attendance on the king. "By God, Sir Earl," swore the king to Bigod, "you shall either go or hang!" "By God, Sir King," was the cool reply, "I will neither go nor hang!" Ere the Parliament he had convened could meet, Edward had discovered his own powerlessness, and, with one of those sudden revulsions of feeling of which his nature was capable, he stood before his people in Westminster Hall and owned, with a burst of tears, that he had taken their substance without due warrant of law. His passionate appeal to their loyalty wrested a reluctant assent to the prosecution of the war, but the crisis had taught the need of further securities against the royal power. While Edward was still struggling in Flanders, the primate, Winchelsey, joined the two earls and the citizens of London in forbidding any further levy of supplies till Edward at Ghent solemnly confirmed the charter with the new clauses added to it prohibiting the king from raising taxes save by general consent of the realm. At the demand of the barons he renewed the confirmation in 1299, when his attempt to add an evasive clause saving the rights of the Crown proved the justice of their distrust. Two years later a fresh gathering of the barons in arms wrested from him the full execution of the Charter of Forests. The bitterness of his humiliation preyed on him; he evaded his pledge to levy no new taxes on merchandise by the sale to merchants of certain privileges of trading; and a formal absolution from his promises which he obtained from the pope showed his intention of reopening the questions he had

yielded. His hand was stayed, however, by the fatal struggle with Scotland which revived in the rising of Robert Bruce, and the king's death bequeathed the contest to his worthless son.

Worthless, however, as Edward the Second morally might be, he was far from being destitute of the intellectual power which seemed hereditary in the Plantagenets. It was his settled purpose to fling off the yoke of the baronage, and the means by which he designed accomplishing his purpose was the choice of a minister wholly dependent on the Crown. We have already noticed the change by which the "clerks of the king's chapel," who had been the ministers of arbitrary government under the Normans and Angevins, had been quietly superseded by the prelates and lords of the Continual Council. At the close of his father's reign, a direct demand on the part of the barons to nominate the great officers of state had been curtly rejected; but the royal choice had been practically limited in the selection of its ministers to the class of prelates and nobles, and, however closely connected with royalty, such officers always to a great extent shared the feelings and opinions of their order. It seems to have been the aim of the young king to undo the change which had been silently brought about, and to imitate the policy of the contemporary sovereigns of France by choosing as his ministers men of an inferior position, wholly dependent on the Crown for their power, and representatives of nothing but the policy and interests of their master. Piers Gaveston, a foreigner sprung from a family of Guienne, had been his friend and companion during his father's reign, at the close of which he had been banished from the realm for his share in intrigues which had divided Edward from his son. At the new king's accession he was at once recalled, created Earl of Cornwall, and placed at the head of the administration. Gay, genial, thriftless, Gaveston showed in his first acts the quickness and audacity of Southern Gaul; the older ministers were dismissed, all claims of precedence or inheritance set aside in the distribution of offices at the coronation, while taunts and defiances goaded the proud baronage to fury. The favorite was a fine soldier, and his lance unhorsed his opponents in tourney after tourney. His reckless wit flung nicknames

about the court; the Earl of Lancaster was "the Actor," Pembroke "the Jew," Warwick "the Black Dog." But taunt and defiance broke helplessly against the iron mass of the baronage. After a few months of power the demand of the Parliament for his dismissal could not be resisted, and he was formally banished from the realm. In the following year it was only by conceding the rights which his father had sought to establish of imposing import duties on the merchants by their own assent, that Edward procured a subsidy for the Scotch war. The firmness of the baronage sprang from their having found a head in the Earl of Lancaster, son of Edmund Crouchback. His weight proved irresistible. When Edward at the close of the Parliament recalled Gaveston, Lancaster withdrew from the royal council and a Parliament which met in 1310 resolved that the affairs of the realm should be entrusted for a year to a body of twenty-one "Ordainers."

A formidable list of "Ordinances," drawn up by the twenty-one, met Edward on his return from a fruitless warfare with the Scots. By this long and important statute Gaveston was banished, other advisers were driven from the council, and the Florentine bankers whose loans had enabled Edward to hold the baronage at bay sent out of the realm. The customs duties imposed by Edward the First were declared to be illegal. Parliaments were to be called every year, and in these assemblies the king's servants were to be brought, if need were, to justice. The great officers of state were to be appointed with the counsel and consent of the baronage, and to be sworn in Parliament. The same consent of the barons in Parliament was to be needful ere the king could declare war or absent himself from the realm. As the Ordinances show, the baronage still looked on Parliament rather as a political organization of the nobles than as a gathering of the three estates of the realm. The lower clergy pass unnoticed; the commons are regarded as mere taxpayers whose part was still confined to the presentation of petitions of grievances and the grant of money. But even in this imperfect fashion the Parliament was a real representation of the country, and Edward was forced to assent to the Ordinances after a long and obstinate struggle. The exile of Gaveston was the sign of the barons' triumph; his recall a few months

later renewed a strife which was only ended by his capture in Scarborough. The "Black Dog" of Warwick had sworn that the favorite should feel his teeth; and Gaveston, who flung himself in vain at the feet of the Earl of Lancaster, praying for pity "from his gentle lord," was beheaded in defiance of the terms of his capitulation on Blacklow Hill. The king's burst of grief was as fruitless as his threats of vengeance; a feigned submission of the conquerors completed the royal humiliation, and the barons knelt before Edward in Westminster Hall to receive a pardon which seemed the death-blow of the royal power. But if Edward was powerless to conquer the baronage he could still, by evading the observance of the Ordinances, throw the whole realm into confusion. The six years that follow Gaveston's death are among the darkest in our history. A terrible succession of famines intensified the suffering which sprang from the utter absence of all rule during the dissension between the barons and the king. The overthrow of Bannockburn, and the ravages of the Scots in the north, brought shame on England such as it had never known. At last the capture of Berwick by Robert Bruce forced Edward to give way, the Ordinances were formally accepted, an amnesty granted, and a small number of peers belonging to the barons' party added to the great officers of state.

The Earl of Lancaster, by the union of the four earldoms of Lincoln, Leicester, Derby, and Lancaster, as well as by his royal blood (for like the king he was a grandson of Henry the Third), stood at the head of the English baronage, and the issue of the long struggle with Edward raised him for the moment to supreme power in the realm. But his character seems to have fallen far beneath the greatness of his position. Incapable of governing, he could do little but regard with jealousy the new advisers on whom the king now leaned, the older and the younger Hugh le Despenser. The rise of the younger, on whom the king bestowed the county of Glamorgan with the hand of its heiress, was rapid enough to excite general jealousy, and Lancaster found little difficulty in extorting by force of arms his exile from the kingdom. But the tide of popular sympathy, already wavering, was turned to the royal cause by an insult offered to the queen,

against whom Lady Badlesmere had closed the doors of Ledes Castle, and the unexpected energy shown by Edward in avenging the insult gave fresh strength to his cause. He found himself strong enough to recall Despenser, and when Lancaster convoked the baronage to force him again into exile, the weakness of their party was shown by the treasonable negotiations into which the earl entered with the Scots, and by his precipitate retreat to the north on the advance of the royal army. At Boroughbridge his forces were arrested and dispersed, and the earl himself, brought captive before Edward at Pontefract, was tried and condemned to death as a traitor. "Have mercy on me, King of Heaven," cried Lancaster, as mounted on a gray pony without a bridle he was hurried to execution, "for my earthly king has forsaken me." His death was followed by that of a number of his adherents and by the captivity of others; while a Parliament at York annulled the proceedings against the Despensers, and repealed the Ordinances. It is to this Parliament however, and perhaps to the victorious confidence of the royalists, that we owe the famous provision which reveals the policy of the Despensers, the provision that all laws concerning "the estate of the Crown, or of the realm and people, shall be treated, accorded, and established in Parliaments by our Lord the King and by the consent of the prelates, earls, barons, and commonalty of the realm, according as hath been hitherto accustomed." It would seem from the tenor of this remarkable enactment that much of the sudden revulsion of popular feeling had been owing to the assumption of all legislative action by the baronage alone. But the arrogance of the Despensers, the utter failure of a fresh campaign against Scotland, and the humiliating truce for thirteen years which Edward was forced to conclude with Robert Bruce, soon robbed the Crown of its temporary popularity, and led the way to the sudden catastrophe which closed this disastrous reign. It had been arranged that the queen, a sister of the king of France, should revisit her home to conclude a treaty between the two countries, whose quarrel was again verging upon war; and her son, a boy of twelve years old, followed her to do homage in his father's stead for the duchies of Gascony and Aquitaine. Neither threats nor prayers, how-

ever, could induce either wife or child to return to his court; and the queen's connection with a secret conspiracy of the baronage was revealed when the primate and nobles hurried to her standard on her landing at Orwell. Deserted by all, and repulsed by the citizens of London, whose aid he implored, the king fled hastily to the west and embarked with the Despensers for Lundy Isle; but contrary winds flung the fugitives again on the Welsh coast, where they fell into the hands of the new Earl of Lancaster. The younger Despenser was at once hanged on a gibbet fifty feet high, and the king placed in ward at Kenilworth till his fate could be decided by a Parliament summoned for that purpose at Westminster. The peers who assembled fearlessly revived the constitutional usage of the earlier English freedom, and asserted their right to depose a king who had proved himself unworthy to rule. Not a voice was raised in Edward's behalf, and only four prelates protested when the young prince was proclaimed king by acclamation, and presented as their sovereign to the multitudes without. The revolution soon took legal form in a bill which charged the captive monarch with indolence, incapacity, the loss of Scotland, the violation of his coronation oath, and oppression of the Church and baronage; and on the approval of this it was resolved that the reign of Edward of Caernarvon had ceased and that the Crown had passed to his son, Edward of Windsor. A deputation of the Parliament proceeded to Kenilworth to procure the assent of the discrowned king to his own deposition, and Edward, "clad in a plain black gown," submitted quietly to his fate. Sir William Trussel at once addressed him in words which better than any other mark the true nature of the step which the Parliament had taken. "I, William Trussel, proctor of the earls, barons, and others, having for this full and sufficient power, do render and give back to you, Edward, once king of England, the homage and fealty of the persons named in my procuracy; and acquit and discharge them thereof in the best manner that law and custom will give. And I now make protestation in their name that they will no longer be in your fealty and allegiance, nor claim to hold anything of you as king, but will account you hereafter as a private person, without any manner of royal dig-

nity." A significant act followed these emphatic words. Sir Thomas Blount, the steward of the household, broke his staff of office, a ceremony only used at a king's death, and declared that all persons engaged in the royal service were discharged. In the following September the king was murdered in Berkeley Castle.

Section VI. — The Scotch War of Independence, 1306–1342

To obtain a clear view of the constitutional struggle between the kings and the baronage, we have deferred to its close an account of the great contest which raged throughout the whole period in the north.

With the Convocation of Perth the conquest and settlement of Scotland seemed complete. Edward I., in fact, was preparing for a joint Parliament of the two nations at Carlisle, when the conquered country suddenly sprang again to arms under Robert Bruce, the grandson of one of the original claimants of the Crown. The Norman house of Bruce formed a part of the Yorkshire baronage, but it had acquired through intermarriages the earldom of Carrick and the lordship of Annandale. Both the claimant and his son had been pretty steadily on the English side in the contest with Balliol and Wallace, and Robert had himself been trained in the English court and stood high in the king's favor. But the withdrawal of Balliol gave a new force to his claims upon the Crown, and the discovery of an intrigue which he had set on foot with the Bishop of St. Andrews so roused Edward's jealousy that Bruce fled for his life across the border. In the church of the Gray Friars at Dumfries he met Comyn, the Lord of Badenoch, to whose treachery he attributed the disclosure of his plans, and after the interchange of a few hot words struck him with his dagger to the ground. It was an outrage that admitted of no forgiveness, and Bruce for very safety was forced to assume the crown six weeks after in the abbey of Scone. The news roused Scotland again to arms, and summoned Edward to a fresh contest with his unconquerable foe. But the murder of Comyn had changed the king's mood to a terrible pitilessness; he threatened death against all concerned in the outrage, and exposed the Coun-

tess of Buchan, who had set the crown on Bruce's head, in a cage or open chamber built for the purpose in one of the towers of Berwick. At the solemn feast which celebrated his son's knighthood Edward vowed on the swan which formed the chief dish at the banquet, to devote the rest of his days to exact vengeance from the murderer himself. But even at the moment of the vow, Bruce was already flying for his life to the western islands. "Henceforth," he had said to his wife at their coronation, "thou art queen of Scotland and I king." "I fear," replied Mary Bruce, "we are only playing at royalty, like children in their games." The play was soon turned into bitter earnest. A small English force under Aymer de Valence sufficed to rout the disorderly levies which gathered round the new monarch, and the flight of Bruce left his followers at Edward's mercy. Noble after noble was hurried to the block. The Earl of Athole pleaded kindred with royalty; "His only privilege," burst forth the king, "shall be that of being hanged on a higher gallows than the rest." Knights and priests were strung up side by side by the English justiciars, while the wife and daughter of Robert Bruce were flung into prison. Bruce himself had offered to capitulate to Prince Edward, but the offer only roused the old king to fury. "Who is so bold," he cried, "as to treat with our traitors without our knowledge?" and rising from his sick-bed he led his army northwards to complete the conquest. But the hand of death was upon him, and in the very sight of Scotland the old man breathed his last at Burgh-upon-Sands.

The death of Edward arrested only for a moment the advance of his army to the north. The Earl of Pembroke led it across the border, and found himself master of the country without a blow. Bruce's career became that of a desperate adventurer, for even the Highland chiefs in whose fastnesses he found shelter were bitterly hostile to one who claimed to be king of their foes in the Lowlands. It was this adversity that transformed the murderer of Comyn into the noble leader of a nation's cause. Strong and of commanding presence, brave and genial in temper, Bruce bore the hardships of his career with a courage and hopefulness which never failed. In the legends which clustered round

his name we see him listening in Highland glens to the bay of the bloodhounds on his track, or holding single-handed a pass against a crowd of savage clansmen. Sometimes the little band which clung to him were forced to support themselves by hunting or fishing, sometimes to break up for safety as their enemies tracked them to the lair. Bruce himself had more than once to fling off his shirt of mail and scramble barefoot for very life up the crags. Little by little, however, the dark sky cleared. The English pressure relaxed, as the struggle between Edward and his barons grew fiercer. James Douglas, the darling of Scotch story, was the first of the Lowland barons to rally again to the Bruce, and his daring gave heart to the king's cause. Once he surprised his own house, which had been given to an Englishman, ate the dinner which had been prepared for its new owner, slew his captives, and tossed their bodies on to a pile of wood gathered at the castle gate. Then he staved in the wine vats that the wine might mingle with their blood, and set house and wood pile on fire. A terrible ferocity mingled with heroism in the work of freedom, but the revival of the country went steadily on. Bruce's "harrying of Buchan" after the defeat of its earl, who had joined the English army, at last fairly turned the tide of success. Edinburgh, Roxburgh, Perth, and most of the Scotch fortresses fell one by one into King Robert's hands. The clergy met in council and owned him as their lawful lord. Gradually the Scotch barons who still held to the English cause were coerced into submission, and Bruce found himself strong enough to invest Stirling, the last and the most important of the Scotch fortresses which held out for Edward.

Stirling was in fact the key of Scotland, and its danger roused England out of its civil strife to a vast effort for the recovery of its prey. Thirty thousand horsemen formed the fighting part of the great army which followed Edward to the north, and a host of wild marauders had been summoned from Ireland and Wales to its support. The army which Bruce had gathered to oppose the inroad was formed almost wholly of footmen, and was stationed to the south of Stirling on a rising ground flanked by a little brook, the Bannock burn which gave its name to the engagement. Again two systems of warfare were brought face to face as they had been

brought at Falkirk, for Robert, like Wallace, drew up his force in solid squares or circles of spearmen. The English were dispirited at the very outset by the failure of an attempt to relieve Stirling, and by the issue of a single combat between Bruce and Henry de Bohun, a knight who bore down upon him as he was riding peacefully along the front of his army. Robert was mounted on a small hackney and held only a light battle-ax in his hand, but, warding off his opponent's spear, he cleft his skull with so terrible a blow that the handle of the ax was shattered in his grasp. At the opening of the battle the English archers were thrown forward to rake the Scottish squares, but they were without support and were easily dispersed by a handful of horse whom Bruce had held in reserve for the purpose. The body of men-at-arms next flung themselves on the Scottish front, but their charge was embarrassed by the narrow space along which the line was forced to move, and the steady resistance of the squares soon threw the knighthood into disorder. "The horses that were stickit," says an exulting Scotch writer, "rushed and reeled right rudely." In the moment of failure the sight of a body of camp-followers, whom they mistook for reenforcements to the enemy, spread panic through the English host. It broke in a headlong rout. Its thousands of brilliant horsemen were soon floundering in pits which had guarded the level ground to Bruce's left, or riding in wild haste for the border. Few however were fortunate enough to reach it. Edward himself, with a body of five hundred knights, succeeded in escaping to Dunbar and the sea. But the flower of his knighthood fell into the hands of the victors, while the Irishry and the footmen were ruthlessly cut down by the country folk as they fled. For centuries after, the rich plunder of the English camp left its traces on the treasure and vestment rolls of castle and abbey throughout the Lowlands.

Terrible as was the blow England could not humble herself to relinquish her claim on the Scottish crown. With equal pertinacity Bruce refused all negotiation while the royal title was refused to him, and steadily pushed on the recovery of his southern dominions. Berwick was at last forced to surrender, and held against a desperate attempt at its recapture; while barbarous forays of the borderers under Douglas wasted

Northumberland. Again the strife between the Crown and the baronage was suspended to allow the march of a great English army to the north; but Bruce declined an engagement till the wasted Lowlands starved the invaders into a ruinous retreat. The failure forced England to stoop to a truce for thirteen years, in the negotiation of which Bruce was suffered to take the royal title. But the truce ceased legally with Edward's deposition. Troops gathered on either side, and Edward Balliol, a son of the former king John, was solemnly received as a vassal king of Scotland at the English court. Robert was disabled by leprosy from taking the field in person, but the insult roused him to hurl his marauders again over the border under Douglas and Randolph. An eye-witness has painted for us the Scotch army as it appeared in this campaign: "It consisted of four thousand men-at-arms, knights and esquires, well mounted, besides twenty thousand men bold and hardy, armed after the manner of their country, and mounted upon little hackneys that are never tied up or dressed, but turned immediately after the day's march to pasture on the heath or in the fields. . . . They bring no carriages with them on account of the mountains they have to pass in Northumberland, neither do they carry with them any provisions of bread and wine, for their habits of sobriety are such in time of war that they will live for a long time on flesh half-sodden without bread, and drink the river water without wine. They have therefore no occasion for pots or pans, for they dress the flesh of the cattle in their skins after they have flayed them, and being sure to find plenty of them in the country which they invade, they carry none with them. Under the flaps of his saddle each man carries a broad piece of metal, behind him a little bag of oatmeal: when they have eaten too much of the sodden flesh and their stomach appears weak and empty, they set this plate over the fire, knead the meal with water, and when the plate is hot put a little of the paste upon it in a thin cake like a biscuit, which they eat to warm their stomachs. It is therefore no wonder that they perform a longer day's march than other soldiers." Against such a foe the English troops who marched under their boy king to protect the border were utterly helpless. At one time the army lost its way in the

vast border waste; at another all traces of the enemy had disappeared, and an offer of knighthood and a hundred marks was made to any who could tell where the Scots were encamped. But when found their position behind the Wear proved unassailable, and after a bold sally on the English camp Douglas foiled an attempt at intercepting him by a clever retreat. The English levies broke hopelessly up, and a fresh foray on Northumberland forced the English court to submit to peace. By the treaty of Northampton the independence of Scotland was formally recognized, and Bruce acknowledged as its king.

The pride of England, however, had been too much aroused by the struggle to bear easily its defeat. The first result of the treaty was the overthrow of the government which concluded it, a result hastened by the pride of its head, Roger Mortimer, and by his exclusion of the rest of the nobles from all share in the administration of the realm. The first efforts to shake Roger's power were unsuccessful: a league headed by the Earl of Lancaster broke up without result; and the king's uncle, the Earl of Kent, was actually brought to the block, before the young king himself interfered in the struggle. Entering the council-chamber in Nottingham Castle, with a force which he had introduced through a secret passage in the rock on which it stands, Edward arrested Mortimer with his own hands, hurried him to execution, and assumed the control of affairs. His first care was to restore good order throughout the country, which under the late government had fallen into ruin, and to free his hands by a peace with France for further enterprises in the north. Fortune, indeed, seemed at last to have veered to the English side; the death of Bruce only a year after the treaty of Northampton left the Scottish throne to a child of but eight years old, and the internal difficulties of the realm broke out in civil strife. To the great barons on either side the border the late peace involved serious losses, for many of the Scotch houses held large estates in England, as many of the English lords held large estates in Scotland; and although the treaty had provided for their claims, they had in each case been practically set aside. It is this discontent of the barons at the new settlement which explains the sudden

success of Edward Balliol in his snatch at the Scottish throne. In spite of King Edward's prohibition, he sailed from England at the head of a body of nobles who claimed estates in the north, landed on the shores of Fife, and, after repulsing with immense loss an army which attacked him near Perth, was crowned at Scone, while David Bruce fled helplessly to France. Edward had given no open aid to the enterprise, but the crisis tempted his ambition, and he demanded and obtained from Balliol an acknowledgment of the English suzerainty. The acknowledgment, however, was fatal to Balliol himself. He was at once driven from his realm, and Berwick, which he had agreed to surrender to Edward, was strongly garrisoned against an English attack. The town was soon besieged, but a Scotch army under the regent Douglas, brother to the famous Sir James, advanced to its relief, and attacked a covering force which was encamped on the strong position of Halidon Hill. The English bowmen, however, vindicated the fame they had first won at Falkirk, and were soon to crown in the victory of Crécy; and the Scotch only struggled through the marsh which covered the English front to be riddled with a storm of arrows, and to break in utter rout. The battle decided the fate of Berwick, and from that time the town remained the one part of Edward's conquests which was preserved by the English Crown. Fragment as it was, it was always viewed legally as representing the realm of which it had once formed a part. As Scotland, it had its chancellor, chamberlain, and other officers of State; and the peculiar heading of Acts of Parliament enacted for England "and the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed" still preserves the memory of its peculiar position. Balliol was restored to his throne by the conquerors, and his formal cession of the Lowlands to England rewarded their aid. During the next three years Edward persisted in the line of policy he had adopted, retaining his hold over Southern Scotland, and aiding his subking Balliol in campaign after campaign against the despairing efforts of the nobles who still adhered to the house of Bruce. His perseverance was all but crowned with success, when the outbreak of war with France saved Scotland by drawing the strength of England across the Channel. The patriot party drew again

together. Balliol found himself at last without an adherent and withdrew to the court of Edward, while David returned to his kingdom and won back the chief fastnesses of the Lowlands. The freedom of Scotland was, in fact, secured. From a war of conquest and patriotic resistance the struggle died into a petty strife between two angry neighbors, which became a mere episode in the larger contest between England and France.

CHAPTER V

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR, 1336–1431

Section I. — Edward the Third, 1336–1360

IN the middle of the fourteenth century the great movement towards national unity which had begun under the last of the Norman kings seemed to have reached its end, and the perfect fusion of conquered and conquerors into an English people was marked by the disuse, even amongst the nobler classes, of the French tongue. In spite of the efforts of the grammar schools, and of the strength of fashion, English was winning its way throughout the reign of Edward the Third to its final triumph in that of his grandson. "Children in school," says a writer of the earlier reign, "against the usage and manner of all other nations, be compelled for to leave their own language, and for to construe their lessons and their things in French, and so they have since Normans first came into England. Also gentlemen's children be taught to speak French from the time that they be rocked in their cradle, and know how to speak and play with a child's toy; and uplandish (or country) men will liken themselves to gentlemen, and strive with great busyness to speak French for to be more told of." "This manner," adds a translator of Richard's time, "was much used before the first murrain (the plague of 1349), and is since somewhat changed; for John Cornwal, a master of grammar, changed the lore in grammar school and construing of French into English; and Richard Pencrych learned this manner of teaching of him, as others did of Pencrych. So that now, the year of our Lord, 1385, and of the second King Richard after the Conquest nine, in all the grammar schools of England children leaveth French, and construeth and learneth in English." A more formal note of the change is found when English was ordered to be used in courts of law in 1362 "because the French

tongue is much unknown"; and in the following year it was employed by the chancellor in opening Parliament. Bishops began to preach in English, and the English tracts of Wyclif made it once more a literary tongue. This drift towards a general use of the national tongue told powerfully on literature. The influence of the French romances everywhere tended to make French the one literary language at the opening of the fourteenth century, and in England this influence had been backed by the French tone of the court of Henry the Third and the three Edwards. But at the close of the reign of Edward the Third the long French romances needed to be translated even for knightly hearers. "Let clerks indite in Latin," says the author of the "Testament of Love," "and let Frenchmen in their French also indite their quaint terms, for it is kindly to their mouths; and let us show our fantasies in such wordes as we learned of our mother's tongue." But the new national life afforded nobler material than "fantasies" now for English literature. With the completion of the work of national unity had come the completion of the work of national freedom. Under the first Edward the Parliament had vindicated its right to the control of taxation, under the second it had advanced from the removal of ministers to the deposition of a king, under the third it gave its voice on questions of peace and war, controlled expenditure, and regulated the course of civil administration. The vigor of English life showed itself socially in the wide extension of commerce, in the rapid growth of the woolen trade, and the increase of manufactures after the settlement of Flemish weavers on the eastern coast; in the progress of the towns, fresh as they were from the victory of the craft gilds; and in the development of agriculture through the division of lands, and the rise of the tenant-farmer and the freeholder. It gave nobler signs of its activity in the spirit of national independence and moral earnestness which awoke at the call of Wyclif. New forces of thought and feeling, which were destined to tell on every age of our later history, broke their way through the crust of feudalism in the socialist revolt of the Lollards, and a sudden burst of military glory threw its glamour over the age of Crécy and Poitiers.

It is this new gladness of a great people which utters itself

in the verse of Geoffrey Chaucer. Chaucer was born about 1340, the son of a London vintner who lived in Thames Street; and it was in London that the bulk of his life was spent. His family, though not noble, seems to have been of some importance, for from the opening of his career we find Chaucer in close connection with the court. At sixteen he was made page to the wife of Lionel of Clarence; at nineteen he first bore arms in the campaign of 1359. But he was luckless enough to be made prisoner; and from the time of his release after the treaty of Brétigny he took no further share in the military enterprises of his time. He seems again to have returned to service about the court, and it was now that his first poems made their appearance, and from this time John of Gaunt may be looked upon as his patron. He was employed in seven diplomatic missions, which were probably connected with the financial straits of the Crown, and three of these, in 1372, 1374, and 1378, carried him to Italy. He visited Genoa and the brilliant court of the Visconti at Milan; at Florence, where the memory of Dante, the "great master" whom he commemorates so reverently in his verse, was still living, he may have met Boccaccio; at Padua, like his own clerk of Oxenford, he possibly caught the story of Griseldis from the lips of Petrarca. He was a busy, practical worker; Comptroller of the Customs in 1374, of the Petty Customs in 1382, a member of the Commons in the Parliament of 1386, and from 1389 to 1391 Clerk of the Royal Works, busy with building at Westminster, Windsor, and the Tower. A single portrait has preserved for us his forked beard, his dark-colored dress, the knife and pen-case at his girdle, and we may supplement this portrait by a few vivid touches of his own. The sly, elfish face, the quick walk, the plump figure and portly waist were those of a genial and humorous man; but men jested at his silence, his love of study. "Thou lookest as thou wouldest find an hare," laughs the Host, in the "Canterbury Tales," "and ever on the ground I see thee stare." He heard little of his neighbors' talk when office work was over. "Thou goest home to thy own house anon, and also dumb as any stone thou sittest at another book till fully dazed is thy look, and livest thus as an heremite, although," he adds slyly, "thy

abstinence is lite" (little). But of this abstraction from his fellows there is no trace in his verse. No poetry was ever more human than Chaucer's; none ever came more frankly and genially home to its readers. The first note of his song is a note of freshness and gladness. "Of ditties and of songes glad, the which he for my sake made, the land fulfilled is over all," Gower makes Love say in his lifetime; and the impression of gladness remains just as fresh now that four hundred years have passed away. The historical character of Chaucer's work lies on its surface. It stands out in vivid contrast with the poetic literature from the heart of which it sprang. The long French romances were the product of an age of wealth and ease, of indolent curiosity, of a fanciful and self-indulgent sentiment. Of the great passions which gave life to the Middle Ages, that of religious enthusiasm had degenerated into the pretty conceits of Mariolatry, that of war into the extravagances of chivalry. Love, indeed, remained; it was the one theme of troubadour and trouvère, but it was a love of refinement, of romantic follies, of scholastic discussions, of sensuous enjoyment — a plaything rather than a passion. Nature had to reflect the pleasant indolence of man; the song of the minstrel moved through a perpetual May time; the grass was ever green; the music of the lark and the nightingale rang out from field and thicket. There was a gay avoidance of all that is serious, moral, or reflective in man's life: life was too amusing to be serious, too piquant, too sentimental, too full of interest and gaiety and chat. It was an age of talk: "mirth is none," says the Host, "to ride on by the way dumb as a stone"; and the trouvère aimed simply at being the most agreeable talker of his day. His Romances, his rhymes of Sir Tristram, his "Romance of the Rose," are full of color and fantasy, endless in detail, but with a sort of gorgeous idleness about their very length, the minuteness of their description of outer things, the vagueness of their touch when it passes to the subtler inner world. It was with this literature that Chaucer had till now been familiar, and it was this which he followed in his earlier work. But from the time of his visits to Milan and Genoa his sympathies drew him not to the dying verse of France, but to the new and mighty

upgrowth of poetry in Italy. Dante's eagle looks at him from the sun. "Fraunces Petrark, the laureat poete," is to him one "whose rethorique sweete enlumyned al Itail of poetrie." The "Troilus" is an enlarged English version of Boccaccio's "Filostrato," the "Knight's Tale" bears slight traces of his "Teseide." It was, indeed, the "Decameron" which suggested the very form of the "Canterbury Tales." But even while changing, as it were, the front of English poetry, Chaucer preserves his own distinct personality. If he quizzes in the rhyme of Sir Thopaz the wearisome idleness of the French romance, he retains all that was worth retaining of the French temper, its rapidity and agility of movement, its lightness and brilliancy of touch, its airy mockery, its gaiety and good humor, its critical coolness and self-control. The French wit quickens in him more than in any English writer the sturdy sense and shrewdness of our national disposition, corrects its extravagance, and relieves its somewhat ponderous morality. If, on the other hand, he echoes the joyous carelessness of the Italian tale, he tempers it with the English seriousness. As he follows Boccaccio, all his changes are on the side of purity; and when the "Troilus" of the Florentine ends with the old sneer at the changeableness of woman, Chaucer bids us "look Godward," and dwells on the unchangeableness of Heaven.

But the genius of Chaucer was neither French nor Italian, whatever element it might borrow from either literature, but English to the core, and from 1384 all trace of foreign influence dies away. The great poem on which his fame must rest, the "Canterbury Tales," was begun after his first visits to Italy, and its best tales were written between 1384 and 1391. The last ten years of his life saw a few more tales added; but his power was lessening, and in 1400 he rested from his labors in his last home, a house in the garden of St. Mary's Chapel at Westminster. The framework — that of a pilgrimage from London to Canterbury — not only enabled him to string together a number of tales, composed at different times, but lent itself admirably to the peculiar characteristics of his poetic temper, his dramatic versatility, and the universality of his sympathy. His tales cover the whole field of medieval poetry; the legend of the priest, the knightly romance, the

wonder tale of the traveler, the broad humor of the fabliau, allegory and apologue are all there. He finds a yet wider scope for his genius in the persons who tell these stories, the thirty pilgrims who start in the May morning from the Tabard in Southwark — thirty distinct figures, representatives of every class of English society from the noble to the plowman. We see the "verray perfight gentil knight" in cassock and coat of mail, with his curly-headed squire beside him, fresh as the May morning, and behind them the brown-faced yeoman, in his coat and hood of green, with the good bow in his hand. A group of ecclesiastics light up for us the medieval Church — the brawny hunt-loving monk, whose bridle jingles as loud and clear as the chapel bell — the wanton friar, first among the beggars and harpers of the countryside — the poor parson, threadbare, learned, and devout ("Christ's lore and His apostles twelve he taught, and first he followed it himself") — the summoner with his fiery face — the pardoner with his wallet "bret-full of pardons, come from Rome all hot" — the lively prioress with her courtly French lisp, her soft little red mouth, and "Amor vincit omnia" graven on her brooch. Learning is there in the portly person of the doctor of physic, rich with the profits of the pestilence — the busy sergeant of law, "that ever seemed busier than he was" — the hollow-cheeked clerk of Oxford, with his love of books, and short sharp sentences that disguise a latent tenderness which breaks out at last in the story of Griseldis. Around them crowd types of English industry: the merchant; the franklin, in whose house "it snowed of meat and drink"; the sailor fresh from frays in the Channel; the buxom wife of Bath; the broad-shouldered miller; the haberdasher, carpenter, weaver, dyer, tapestry-maker, each in the livery of his craft; and last, the honest plowman, who would dike and delve for the poor without hire. It is the first time in English poetry that we are brought face to face not with characters or allegories or reminiscences of the past, but with living and breathing men, men distinct in temper and sentiment as in face or costume or mode of speech; and with this distinctness of each maintained throughout the story by a thousand shades of expression and action. It is the first time, too, that we meet with the dramatic power which not only creates each character, but combines it with

its fellows, which not only adjusts each tale or jest to the temper of the person who utters it, but fuses all into a poetic unity. It is life in its largeness, its variety, its complexity, which surrounds us in the "Canterbury Tales." In some of the stories, indeed, composed no doubt at an earlier time, there is the tedium of the old romance or the pedantry of the schoolman; but taken as a whole the poem is the work not of a man of letters, but of a man of action. Chaucer has received his training from war, courts, business, travel — a training not of books, but of life. And it is life that he loves — the delicacy of its sentiment, the breadth of its farce, its laughter and its tears, the tenderness of its Griseldis or the Smollett-like adventures of the miller and the clerks. It is this largeness of heart, this wide tolerance, which enables him to reflect man for us as none but Shakspere has ever reflected him, and to do this with a pathos, a shrewd sense and kindly humor, a freshness and joyousness of feeling, that even Shakspere has not surpassed.

It is strange that such a voice as this should have awakened no echo in the singers who follow; but the first burst of English song died as suddenly and utterly with Chaucer as the hope and glory of his age. The hundred years which follow the brief sunshine of Crécy and the "Canterbury Tales" are years of the deepest gloom; no age of our history is more sad and somber than the age which we traverse from the third Edward to Joan of Arc. The throb of hope and glory which pulsed at its outset through every class of English society died at its close into inaction or despair. Material life lingered on, indeed, commerce still widened, but its progress was dissociated from all the nobler elements of national well-being. The towns sank again into close oligarchies; the bondsmen struggling forward to freedom fell back into a serfage which still leaves its trace on the soil. Literature reached its lowest ebb. The religious revival of the Lollard was trodden out in blood, while the Church shriveled into a self-seeking secular priesthood. In the clash of civil strife political freedom was all but extinguished, and the age which began with the Good Parliament ended with the despotism of the Tudors.

The secret of the change is to be found in the fatal war which for more than a hundred years drained the strength

and corrupted the temper of the English people. We have followed the attack on Scotland to its disastrous close, but the struggle, ere it ended, had involved England in a second contest, to which we must now turn back, a contest yet more ruinous than that which Edward the First had begun. From the war with Scotland sprang the hundred years' struggle with France. From the first France had watched the successes of her rival in the north, partly with a natural jealousy, but still more as likely to afford her an opening for winning the great southern duchy of Guienne and Gascony — the one fragment of Eleanor's inheritance which remained to her descendants. Scotland had no sooner begun to resent the claims of her overlord, Edward the First, than a pretext for open quarrel was found by France in the rivalry between the mariners of Normandy and those of the Cinque Ports, which culminated at the moment in a great sea-fight that proved fatal to 8000 Frenchmen. So eager was Edward to avert a quarrel with France, that his threats roused the English seamen to a characteristic defiance. "Be the King's Council well advised," ran the remonstrance of the mariners, "that if wrong or grievance be done them in any fashion against right, they will sooner forsake wives, children, and all that they have, and go seek through the seas where they shall think to make their profit." In spite, therefore, of Edward's efforts the contest continued, and Philip found an opportunity to cite the king before his court at Paris for wrongs done to him as suzerain. Again Edward endeavored to avert the conflict by a formal cession of Guienne into Philip's hands during forty days, but the refusal of the French sovereign to restore the province left no choice for him but war. The refusal of the Scotch barons to answer his summons to arms, and the revolt of Balliol, proved that the French outrage was but the first blow in a deliberate and long-planned scheme of attack; Edward had for a while no force to waste on France, and when the first conquest of Scotland freed his hands, his league with Flanders for the recovery of Guienne was foiled by the strife with his baronage. A truce with Philip set him free to meet new troubles in the north; but even after the victory of Falkirk Scotch independence was still saved for six years by the threats of

France and the intervention of its ally, Boniface the Eighth; and it was only the quarrel of these two confederates which allowed Edward to complete its subjection. But the rising under Bruce was again backed by French aid and by the renewal of the old quarrel over Guienne — a quarrel which hampered England through the reign of Edward the Second, and which indirectly brought about his terrible fall. The accession of Edward the Third secured a momentary peace, but the fresh attack on Scotland which marked the opening of his reign kindled hostility anew; the young King David found refuge in France, and arms, money, and men were despatched from its ports to support his cause. It was this intervention of France which foiled Edward's hopes of the submission of Scotland at the very moment when success seemed in his grasp; the solemn announcement by Philip of Valois that his treaties bound him to give effective help to his old ally, and the assembly of a French fleet in the Channel, drew the king from his struggle in the north to face a storm which his negotiations could no longer avert.

From the first the war took European dimensions. The weakness of the empire, the captivity of the papacy at Avignon, left France without a rival among European powers. In numbers, in wealth, the French people far surpassed their neighbors over the Channel. England can hardly have counted four millions of inhabitants, France boasted of twenty. Edward could only bring eight thousand men-at-arms into the field. Philip, while a third of his force was busy elsewhere, could appear at the head of forty thousand. Edward's whole energy was bent on meeting the strength of France by a coalition of powers against her; and his plans were helped by the dread which the great feudatories of the empire who lay nearest to him felt of French annexation, as well as by the quarrel of the empire with the papacy. Anticipating the later policy of Godolphin and Pitt, Edward became the paymaster of the poorer princes of Germany; his subsidies purchased the aid of Hainault, Gelders, and Jülich; sixty thousand crowns went to the Duke of Brabant, while the emperor himself was induced by a promise of three thousand gold florins to furnish two thousand men-at-arms. Negotiations and profuse expenditure, however, brought the

king little fruit save the title of Vicar-General of the Empire on the left of the Rhine; now the emperor hung back, now the allies refused to move; and when the host at last crossed the border, Edward found it impossible to bring the French king to an engagement. But as hope from the Imperial alliance faded away, a fresh hope dawned on the king from another quarter. Flanders was his natural ally. England was the great wool-producing country of the West, but few woolen fabrics were woven in England. The number of weavers' gilds shows that the trade was gradually extending, and at the very outset of his reign Edward had taken steps for its encouragement. He invited Flemish weavers to settle in his country, and took the new immigrants, who chose the eastern counties for the seat of their trade, under his royal protection. But English manufactures were still in their infancy, and nine tenths of the English wool went to the looms of Bruges or of Ghent. We may see the rapid growth of this export trade in the fact that the king received in a single year more than £30,000 from duties levied on wool alone. A stoppage of this export would throw half the population of the great Flemish towns out of work; and Flanders was drawn to the English alliance, not only by the interest of trade, but by the democratic spirit of the towns, which jostled roughly with the feudalism of France. A treaty was concluded with the Duke of Brabant and the Flemish towns, and preparations were made for a new campaign. Philip gathered a fleet of two hundred vessels at Sluys to prevent his crossing the Channel, but Edward with a far smaller force utterly destroyed the French ships, and marched to invest Tournay. Its siege, however, proved fruitless; his vast army broke up, and want of money forced him to a truce for a year. A quarrel of succession to the Duchy of Brittany, which broke out in 1341, and in which of the two rival claimants one was supported by Philip and the other by Edward, dragged on year after year. In Flanders things went ill for the English cause, and the death of the great statesman Van Arteveldt in 1345 proved a heavy blow to Edward's projects. The king's difficulties, indeed, had at last reached their height. His loans from the great bankers of Florence amounted to half a million of our

money; his overtures for peace were contemptuously rejected; the claim which he advanced to the French crown found not a single adherent save among the burghers of Ghent. To establish such a claim, indeed, was difficult enough. The three sons of Philip the Fair had died without male issue, and Edward claimed as the son of Philip's daughter Isabella. But though her brothers had left no sons, they had left daughters; and if female succession were admitted, these daughters of Philip's sons would precede a son of Philip's daughter. Isabella met this difficulty by contending that though females could transmit the right of succession they could not themselves possess it, and that her son, as the nearest living male descendant of Philip, and born in his lifetime, could claim in preference to females who were related to Philip in as near a degree. But the bulk of French jurists asserted that only male succession gave right to the throne. On such a theory the right inheritable from Philip was exhausted; and the crown passed to the son of his brother Charles of Valois, who in fact peacefully mounted the throne as Philip the Fifth. Edward's claim seems to have been regarded on both sides as a mere formality; the king, in fact, did full and liege homage to his rival for his duchy of Guienne; and it was not till his hopes from Germany had been exhausted, and his claim was found to be useful in securing the loyal aid of the Flemish towns, that it was brought seriously to the front.

The failure of his foreign hopes threw Edward on the resources of England itself, and it was with an army of thirty thousand men that he landed at La Hogue, and commenced a march which was to change the whole face of the war. The French forces were engaged in holding in check an English army which had landed in Guienne; and panic seized the French king as Edward now marched through Normandy, and, finding the bridges on the lower Seine broken, pushed straight on Paris, rebuilt the bridge of Poissy, and threatened the capital. At this crisis, however, France found an unexpected help in a body of German knights. The pope, having deposed the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, had crowned as his successor a son of King John of Bohemia, the well-known Charles IV. of the Golden Bull. But against

this papal assumption of a right to bestow the German crown, Germany rose as one man, and Charles, driven to seek help from Philip, now found himself in France with his father and a troop of five hundred knights. Hurrying to Paris this German force formed the nucleus of an army which assembled at St. Denys, and which was soon reenforced by 15,000 Genoese crossbowmen who had been hired from among the soldiers of the Lord of Monaco on the sunny Riviera, and arrived at this hour of need. The French troops too were called from Guienne to the rescue. With this host rapidly gathering in his front Edward abandoned his march on Paris, and threw himself across the Seine to join a Flemish force gathered at Gravelines and open a campaign in the north. But the rivers in his path were carefully guarded, and it was only by surprising the ford of Blanche-Taque on the Somme, that Edward escaped the necessity of surrendering to the vast host which was now hastening in pursuit. His communications, however, were no sooner secured than he halted at the village of Crécy, in Ponthieu, and resolved to give battle. Half of his army, now greatly reduced in strength by his rapid marches, consisted of the light-armed footmen of Ireland and Wales; the bulk of the remainder was composed of English bowmen. The king ordered his men-at-arms to dismount, and drew up his forces on a low rise sloping gently to the southeast, with a windmill on its summit from which he could overlook the whole field of battle. Immediately beneath him lay his reserve, while at the base of the slope was placed the main body of the army in two divisions, that to the right commanded by the young Prince of Wales, Edward the Black Prince as he was called, that to the left by the Earl of Northampton. A small ditch protected the English front, and behind it the bowmen were drawn up "in the form of a harrow," with small bombards between them "which, with fire, threw little iron balls to frighten the horses" — the first instance of the use of artillery in field warfare. The halt of the English army took Philip by surprise, and he attempted for a time to check the advance of his army, but the disorderly host rolled on to the English front. The sight of his enemies, indeed, stirred the king's own blood to fury, "for he hated them,"

and at vespers the fight began. The Genoese crossbowmen were ordered to begin the attack, but the men were weary with the march; a sudden storm wetted and rendered useless their bowstrings; and the loud shouts with which they leapt forward to the encounter were met with dogged silence in the English ranks. Their first arrow-flight, however, brought a terrible reply. So rapid was the English shot, "that it seemed as if it snowed." "Kill me these scoundrels," shouted Philip, as the Genoese fell back; and his men-at-arms plunged butchering into their broken ranks, while the counts of Alençon and Flanders, at the head of the French knighthood, fell hotly on the prince's line. For the instant his small force seemed lost, but Edward refused to send him aid. "Is he dead or unhorsed, or so wounded that he cannot help himself?" he asked the envoy. "No, sir," was the reply, "but he is in a hard passage of arms, and sorely needs your help." "Return to those that sent you, Sir Thomas," said the king, "and bid them not send to me again so long as my son lives! Let the boy win his spurs; for if God so order it, I will that the day may be his, and that the honor may be with him and them to whom I have given it in charge." Edward could see, in fact, from his higher ground, that all went well. The English bowmen and men-at-arms held their ground stoutly, while the Welshmen stabbed the French horses in the mêlée, and brought knight after knight to the ground. Soon the French host was wavering in a fatal confusion. "You are my vassals, my friends," cried the blind King John of Bohemia, who had joined Philip's army, to the German nobles around him: "I pray and beseech you to lead me so far into the fight that I may strike one good blow with this sword of mine!" Linking their bridles together, the little company plunged into the thick of the combat to fall as their fellows were falling. The battle went steadily against the French: at last Philip himself hurried from the field, and the defeat became a rout: 1200 knights and 30,000 footmen — a number equal to the whole English force — lay dead upon the ground.

"God has punished us for our sins," cries the chronicler of St. Denys, in a passion of bewildered grief, as he tells the rout of the great host which he had seen mustering beneath his

abbey walls. But the fall of France was hardly so sudden or so incomprehensible as the ruin at a single blow of a system of warfare, and of the political and social fabric which rested on it. Feudalism depended on the superiority of the mounted noble to the unmounted churl; its fighting power lay in its knighthood. But the English yeomen and small freeholders who bore the bow in the national fyrd had raised their weapon into a terrible engine of war; in the English archers Edward carried a new class of soldiers to the fields of France. The churl had struck down the noble; the yeoman proved more than a match in sheer hard fighting for the knight. From the day of Crécy feudalism tottered slowly but surely to its grave. To England the day was the beginning of a career of military glory, which, fatal as it was destined to prove to the higher sentiments and interests of the nation, gave it for the moment an energy such as it had never known before. Victory followed victory. A few months after Crécy a Scotch army which had burst into the north was routed at Neville's Cross, and its king, David Bruce, taken prisoner; while the withdrawal of the French from the Garonne enabled the English to recover Poitou. Edward meanwhile turned to strike at the naval superiority of France by securing the mastery of the Channel. Calais was a great pirate haven; in one year alone, twenty-two privateers had sailed from its port; while its capture promised the king an easy base of communication with Flanders, and of operations against France. The siege lasted a year, and it was not till Philip had failed to relieve it that the town was starved into surrender. Mercy was granted to the garrison and the people on condition that six of the citizens gave themselves unconditionally into the king's hands. "On them," said Edward, with a burst of bitter hatred, "I will do my will." At the sound of the town bell, Jehan le Bel tells us, the folk of Calais gathered round the bearer of these terms, "desiring to hear their good news, for they were all mad with hunger. When the said knight told them his news, then began they to weep and cry so loudly that it was great pity. Then stood up the wealthiest burgess of the town, Master Eustache de St. Pierre by name, and spake thus before all: 'My masters, great grief and mishap it were for all to leave such a people as this is to die by

famine or otherwise; and great charity and grace would he win from our Lord who could defend them from dying. For me, I have great hope in the Lord that if I can save this people by my death, I shall have pardon for my faults, wherefore will I be the first of the six, and of my own will put myself barefoot in my shirt and with a halter round my neck in the mercy of King Edward.'" The list of devoted men was soon made up, and the six victims were led before the king. "All the host assembled together; there was great press, and many bade hang them openly, and many wept for pity. The noble king came with his train of counts and barons to the place, and the queen followed him, though great with child, to see what there would be. The six citizens knelt down at once before the king, and Master Eustache said thus: 'Gentle king, here be we six who have been of the old bourgeoisie of Calais and great merchants; we bring you the keys of the town and castle of Calais, and render them to you at your pleasure. We set ourselves in such wise as you see purely at your will, to save the remnant of the people that has suffered much pain. So may you have pity and mercy on us for your high nobleness' sake.' Certes, there was then in that place neither lord nor knight that wept not for pity, nor who could speak for pity; but the king had his heart so hardened by wrath, that for a long while he could not reply; then he commanded to cut off their heads. All the knights and lords prayed him with tears, as much as they could, to have pity on them, but he would not hear. Then spoke the gentle knight, Master Walter de Maunay, and said, 'Ha, gentle sire! bridle your wrath; you have the renown and good fame of all gentleness; do not a thing whereby men can speak any villainy of you! If you have no pity, all men will say that you have a heart full of all cruelty to put these good citizens to death that of their own will are come to render themselves to you to save the remnant of their people.' At this point the king changed countenance with wrath, and said, 'Hold your peace, Master Walter! it shall be none otherwise. Call the headsman! They of Calais have made so many of my men die, that they must die themselves!' Then did the noble queen of England a deed of noble lowliness, seeing she was great with child, and wept so tenderly

for pity, that she could no longer stand upright; therefore she cast herself on her knees before her lord the king, and spake on this wise: 'Ah, gentle sire! from the day that I passed over sea in great peril, as you know, I have asked for nothing: now pray I and beseech you, with folded hands, for the love of our Lady's Son, to have mercy upon them.' The gentle king waited for a while before speaking, and looked on the queen as she knelt before him bitterly weeping. Then began his heart to soften a little, and he said, 'Lady, I would rather you had been otherwhere; you pray so tenderly, that I dare not refuse you; and though I do it against my will, nevertheless take them, I give them to you.' Then took he the six citizens by the halters and delivered them to the queen, and released from death all those of Calais for the love of her; and the good lady bade them clothe the six burgesses and make them good cheer."

Edward now stood at the height of his renown. He had won the greatest victory of his age. France, till now the first of European states, was broken and dashed from her pride of place at a single blow. A naval picture of Froissart sketches Edward for us as he sailed to meet a Spanish fleet which was sweeping the narrow seas. We see the king sitting on deck in his jacket of black velvet, his head covered by a black beaver hat "which became him well," and calling on Sir John Chandos to troll out the songs he had brought with him from Germany, till the Spanish ships heave in sight and a furious fight begins which ends in a victory that leaves Edward "King of the Seas." But peace with France was as far off as ever. Even the truce which for seven years was forced on both countries by sheer exhaustion became at last impossible. Edward prepared three armies to act at once in Normandy, Brittany, and Guienne, but the plan of the campaign broke down. The Black Prince, as the hero of Crécy was called, alone won a disgraceful success. Unable to pay his troops, he staved off their demands by a campaign of sheer pillage. Northern and Central France had by this time fallen into utter ruin; the royal treasury was empty, the fortresses unoccupied, the troops disbanded for want of pay, the country swept by bandits. Only the south remained at peace, and the young prince led his army of freebooters up the

Garonne into "what was before one of the fat countries of the world, the people good and simple, who did not know what war was; indeed, no war had been waged against them till the prince came. The English and Gascons found the country full and gay, the rooms adorned with carpets and draperies, the caskets and chests full of fair jewels. But nothing was safe from these robbers. They, and especially the Gascons, who are very greedy, carried off everything." The capture of Narbonne loaded them with booty, and they fell back to Bordeaux, "their horses so laden with spoil that they could hardly move." The next year a march of the prince's army on the Loire pointed straight upon Paris, and a French army under John, who had succeeded Philip of Valois on the throne, hurried to check his advance. The prince gave orders for a retreat, but as he approached Poitiers he found the French, who now numbered 60,000 men, in his path. He at once took a strong position in the fields of Maupertuis, his front covered by thick hedges, and approachable only by a deep and narrow lane which ran between vineyards. The prince lined the vineyards and hedges with bowmen, and drew up his small body of men-at-arms at the point where the lane opened upon the higher plain where he was encamped. His force numbered only 8000 men, and the danger was great enough to force him to offer the surrender of his prisoners and of the places he had taken, and an oath not to fight against France for seven years, in exchange for a free retreat. The terms were rejected, and three hundred French knights charged up the narrow lane. It was soon choked with men and horses, while the front ranks of the advancing army fell back before a galling fire of arrows from the hedgerows. In the moment of confusion a body of English horsemen, posted on a hill to the right, charged suddenly on the French flank, and the prince seized the opportunity to fall boldly on their front. The English archery completed the disorder produced by this sudden attack; the French king was taken, desperately fighting; and at noontide, when his army poured back in utter rout to the gates of Poitiers, 8000 of their number had fallen on the field, 3000 in the flight, and 2000 men-at-arms, with a crowd of nobles, were taken prisoners. The royal

captive entered London in triumph, and a truce for two years seemed to give healing-time to France. But the miserable country found no rest in itself. The routed soldiery turned into free companies of bandits, while the captive lords procured the sums needed for their ransom by extortion from the peasantry, who were driven by oppression and famine into wild insurrection, butchering their lords, and firing the castles; while Paris, impatient of the weakness and misrule of the Regency, rose in arms against the crown. The "Jacquerie," as the peasant rising was called, had hardly been crushed, when Edward again poured ravaging over the wasted land. Famine, however, proved its best defense. "I could not believe," said Petrarch of this time, "that this was the same France which I had seen so rich and flourishing. Nothing presented itself to my eyes but a fearful solitude, an utter poverty, land uncultivated, houses in ruins. Even the neighborhood of Paris showed everywhere marks of desolation and conflagration. The streets are deserted, the roads overgrown with weeds, the whole is a vast solitude." The misery of the land at last bent Charles to submission, and in May a treaty was concluded at Brétigny, a small place to the eastward of Chartres. By this treaty the English king waived his claims on the crown of France and on the duchy of Normandy. On the other hand, his duchy of Aquitaine, which included Gascony, Poitou, and Saintonge, the Limousin and the Angoumois, Périgord and the counties of Bigorre and Rouergue, was not only restored but freed from its obligations as a French fief, and granted in full sovereignty with Ponthieu, Edward's heritage from the second wife of Edward the First, as well as with Guisnes and his new conquest of Calais.

Section II. — The Good Parliament, 1360–1377

If we turn from the stirring but barren annals of foreign warfare to the more fruitful field of constitutional progress, we are at once struck with a marked change which takes place during this period in the composition of Parliament. The division, with which we are so familiar, into a House of Lords and a House of Commons, formed no part of the original plan of Edward the First; in the earlier Parliaments, each

of the four orders of clergy, barons, knights, and burgesses met, deliberated, and made their grants apart from each other. This isolation, however, of the estates soon showed signs of breaking down. While the clergy, as we have seen, held steadily aloof from any real union with its fellow orders, the knights of the shire were drawn by the similarity of their social position into a close connection with the lords. They seem, in fact, to have been soon admitted by the baronage to an almost equal position with themselves, whether as legislators or counselors of the Crown. The burgesses, on the other hand, took little part at first in parliamentary proceedings, save in those which related to the taxation of their class. But their position was raised by the strifes of the reign of Edward the Second, when their aid was needed by the baronage in its struggle with the Crown; and their right to share fully in all legislative action was asserted in the famous statute of 1322. Gradually too, through causes with which we are imperfectly acquainted, the knights of the shire drifted from their older connection with the baronage into so close and intimate a union with the representatives of the towns that at the opening of the reign of Edward the Third the two orders are found grouped formally together, under the name of "The Commons"; and by 1341 the final division of Parliament into two Houses was complete. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of this change. Had Parliament remained broken up into four orders of clergy, barons, knights, and citizens, its power would have been neutralized at every great crisis by the jealousies and difficulty of cooperation among its component parts. A permanent union of the knighthood and the baronage, on the other hand, would have converted Parliament into a mere representative of an aristocratic caste, and would have robbed it of the strength which it has drawn from its connection with the great body of the commercial classes. The new attitude of the knighthood, their social connection as landed gentry with the baronage, their political union with the burgesses, really welded the three orders into one, and gave that unity of feeling and action to our Parliament on which its power has ever since mainly depended. From the moment of this change, indeed, we see a marked increase of parliamentary

activity. The need of continual grants during the war brought about an assembly of Parliament year by year; and with each supply some step was made to greater political influence. A crowd of enactments for the regulation of trade, whether wise or unwise, and for the protection of the subject against oppression or injustice, as well as the great ecclesiastical provisions of this reign, show the rapid widening of the sphere of parliamentary action. The Houses claimed an exclusive right to grant supplies, and asserted the principle of ministerial responsibility to Parliament. But the Commons long shrank from meddling with purely administrative matters. Edward in his anxiety to shift from his shoulders the responsibility of the war with France, referred to them for counsel on the subject of one of the numerous propositions of peace. "Most dreaded lord," they replied, "as to your war and the equipment necessary for it, we are so ignorant and simple that we know not how, nor have the power, to devise: wherefore we pray your Grace to excuse us in this matter, and that it please you, with advice of the great and wise persons of your council, to ordain what seems best to you for the honor and profit of yourself and of your kingdom; and whatsoever shall be thus ordained by assent and agreement on the part of you and your lords we readily assent to, and will hold it firmly established." But while shrinking from so wide an extension of their responsibility, the Commons wrested from the Crown a practical reform of the highest value. As yet their petitions, if granted, were often changed or left incomplete in the statute or ordinance which professed to embody them, or were delayed till the session had closed. Thus many provisions made in Parliament had hitherto been evaded or set aside. But the Commons now met this abuse by a demand that on the royal assent being given their petitions should be turned without change into statutes of the realm, and derive force of law from their entry on the rolls of Parliament.

The political responsibility which the Commons evaded was at last forced on them by the misfortunes of the war. In spite of quarrels in Brittany and elsewhere, peace was fairly preserved in the nine years which followed the treaty of Brétigny; but the shrewd eye of Charles the Fifth, the suc-

cessor of John, was watching keenly for the moment of renewing the struggle. He had cleared his kingdom of the freebooters by despatching them into Spain, and the Black Prince had plunged into the revolutions of that country only to return from his fruitless victory of Navarete in broken health, and impoverished by the expenses of the campaign. The anger caused by the taxation which this necessitated was fanned by Charles into revolt. He listened, in spite of the treaty, to an appeal from the lords of Aquitaine, and summoned the Black Prince to his court. "I will come," replied the prince, "but helmet on head, and with sixty thousand men at my back." War, however, had hardly been declared before the ability with which Charles had laid his plans was seen in his seizure of Ponthieu, and in a rising of the whole country south of the Garonne. The Black Prince, borne on a litter to the walls of Limoges, recovered the town, which had been surrendered to the French, and by a merciless massacre sullied the fame of his earlier exploits; but sickness recalled him home, and the war, protracted by the caution of Charles, who forbade his armies to engage, did little but exhaust the energy and treasures of England. At last, however, the error of the prince's policy was seen in the appearance of a Spanish fleet in the Channel, and in a decisive victory which it won over an English convoy off Rochelle. The blow was in fact fatal to the English cause; it wrested from Edward the mastery of the seas, and cut off his communication with Aquitaine. Charles was roused to new exertions. Poitou, Saintonge, and the Angoumois yielded to his general Du Guesclin, and Rochelle was surrendered by its citizens. A great army under the king's third son, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, penetrated fruitlessly into the heart of France. Charles had forbidden any fighting. "If a storm rages over the land," said the king coolly, "it disperses of itself; and so will it be with the English." Winter, in fact, overtook the duke in the mountains of Auvergne, and a mere fragment of his host reached Bordeaux. The failure was the signal for a general defection, and ere the summer of 1374 had closed the two towns of Bordeaux and Bayonne were all that remained of the English possessions in Southern France.

It was a time of shame and suffering such as England had never known. Her conquests were lost, her shores insulted, her fleets annihilated, her commerce swept from the seas; while within she was exhausted by the long and costly war, as well as by the ravages of pestilence. In the hour of distress the eyes of the hard-pressed nobles and knighthood turned greedily on the riches of the Church. Never had her spiritual or moral hold on the nation been less; never had her wealth been greater. Out of a population of some three millions, the ecclesiastics numbered between twenty and thirty thousand. Wild tales of their riches floated about. They were said to own in landed property alone more than a third of the soil, their "spiritualities" in dues and offerings amounting to twice the king's revenue. The throng of bishops round the council-board was still more galling to the feudal baronage, flushed as it was with a new pride by the victories of Crécy and Poitiers. On the renewal of the war the Parliament prayed that the chief offices of State might be placed in lay hands. William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, resigned the chancellorship, another prelate the treasury, to lay dependents of the great nobles; and the panic of the clergy was seen in large grants which they voted in Convocation. The baronage found a leader in John of Gaunt; but even the promise to pillage the Church failed to win for the duke and his party the good-will of the lesser gentry and of the burgesses; while the corruption and the utter failure of the new administration and the calamities of the war left it powerless before the Parliament of 1376. The action of this Parliament marks a new stage in the character of the national opposition to the misrule of the Crown. Till now the task of resistance had devolved on the baronage, and had been carried out through risings of its feudal tenantry; but the misgovernment was now that of a main part of the baronage itself in actual conjunction with the Crown. Only in the power of the Commons lay any adequate means of peaceful redress. The old reluctance of the Lower House to meddle with matters of State was roughly swept away therefore by the pressure of the time. The Black Prince, sick as he was to death and anxious to secure his child's succession by the removal of John of Gaunt, the prelates with William of

Wykeham at their head, resolute again to take their place in the royal councils and to check the projects of ecclesiastical spoliation, alike found in it a body to oppose to the duke's administration. Backed by powers such as these, the action of the Commons showed none of their old timidity or self-distrust. The knights of the shire united with the burgesses in a joint attack on the royal council. "Trusting in God, and standing with his followers before the nobles, whereof the chief was John, Duke of Lancaster, whose doings were ever contrary," their speaker, Sir Peter de la Mare, denounced the mismanagement of the war, the oppressive taxation, and demanded an account of the expenditure. "What do these base and ignoble knights attempt?" cried John of Gaunt. "Do they think they be kings or princes of the land?" But even the duke was silenced by the charges brought against the government, and the Parliament proceeded to the impeachment and condemnation of two ministers, Latimer and Lyons. The king himself had sunk into dotage, and was wholly under the influence of a mistress named Alice Perrers; she was banished, and several of the royal servants driven from the court. One hundred and forty petitions were presented, which embodied the grievances of the realm. They demanded the annual assembly of Parliament, and freedom of election for the knights of the shire, whose choice was now often tampered with by the Crown; they protested against arbitrary taxation and papal inroads on the liberties of the Church; petitioned for the protection of trade, the enforcement of the statute of laborers, and the limitation of the powers of chartered crafts. At the death of the Black Prince his little son Richard was brought into Parliament and acknowledged as heir. But the Houses were no sooner dismissed than Lancaster resumed his power. His haughty will flung aside all restraints of law. He dismissed the new lords and prelates from the council. He called back Alice Perrers and the disgraced ministers. He declared the Good Parliament no parliament, and did not suffer its petitions to be enrolled as statutes. He imprisoned Peter de la Mare, and confiscated the possessions of William of Wykeham. His attack on this prelate was an attack on the clergy at large. Fresh projects of spoliation were openly canvassed,

and it is his support of these plans of confiscation which now brings us across the path of John Wyclif.

Section III. — John Wyclif

Nothing is more remarkable than the contrast between the obscurity of Wyclif's earlier life and the fulness and vividness of our knowledge of him during the twenty years which preceded its close. Born in the earlier part of the fourteenth century, he had already passed middle age when he was appointed to the mastership of Balliol College in the University of Oxford, and recognized as first among the schoolmen of his day. Of all the scholastic doctors those of England had been throughout the keenest and the most daring in philosophical speculation; a reckless audacity and love of novelty was the common note of Bacon, Duns Scotus, and Ockham, as against the sober and more disciplined learning of the Parisian schoolmen, Albert and Aquinas. But the decay of the University of Paris during the English wars was transferring her intellectual supremacy to Oxford, and in Oxford Wyclif stood without a rival. From his predecessor, Bradwardine, whose work as a scholastic teacher he carried on in the speculative treatises he published during this period, he inherited the tendency to a predestinarian Augustinianism which formed the groundwork of his later theological revolt. His debt to Ockham revealed itself in his earliest efforts at Church reform. Undismayed by the thunder and excommunications of the Church, Ockham had not shrunk in his enthusiasm for the empire from attacking the foundations of the papal supremacy or from asserting the rights of the civil power. The spare, emaciated frame of Wyclif, weakened by study and by asceticism, hardly promised a reformer who would carry on the stormy work of Ockham; but within this frail form lay a temper quick and restless, an immense energy, an immovable conviction, an unconquerable pride. The personal charm which ever accompanies real greatness only deepened the influence he derived from the spotless purity of his life. As yet indeed even Wyclif himself can hardly have suspected the immense range of his intellectual power. It was only the struggle that lay before him which revealed in the dry and subtle schoolman the

founder of our later English prose, a master of popular invective, of irony, of persuasion, a dexterous politician, an audacious partisan, the organizer of a religious order, the unsparing assailant of abuses, the boldest and most indefatigable of controversialists, the first reformer who dared, when deserted and alone, to question and deny the creed of the Christendom around him, to break through the tradition of the past, and with his last breath to assert the freedom of religious thought against the dogmas of the papacy.

The attack of Wyclif began precisely at the moment when the Church of the Middle Ages had sunk to its lowest point of spiritual decay. The transfer of the papacy to Avignon robbed it of half the awe in which it had been held by Englishmen, for not only had the popes sunk into creatures of the French king, but their greed and extortion produced almost universal revolt. The claim of first-fruits and annates from rectory and bishopric, the assumption of a right to dispose of all benefices in ecclesiastical patronage, the direct taxation of the clergy, the intrusion of foreign priests into English livings, the opening a mart for the disposal of pardons, dispensations, and indulgences, and the encouragement of appeals to the papal court produced a wide-spread national irritation which never slept till the Reformation. The people scorned a "French pope," and threatened his legates with stoning when they landed. The wit of Chaucer flouted the wallet of "pardons hot from Rome." Parliament vindicated the right of the State to prohibit any questioning of judgments rendered in the king's courts, or any prosecution of a suit in foreign courts, by the Statute of Præmunire, and denied the papal claim to dispose of benefices by that of Provisors. But the effort was practically foiled by the treacherous diplomacy of the Crown. The pope waived indeed his alleged right to appoint foreigners; but by a compromise, in which pope and king combined for the enslaving of the Church, bishoprics, abbacies, and livings in the gift of churchmen still continued to receive papal nominees who had been first chosen by the Crown, so that the treasures of king and pope profited by the arrangement. The protest of the Good Parliament is a record of the ill success of its predecessors' attempts. It asserted that the taxes levied by the pope amounted to five times the amount of those levied by the king,

that by reservation during the life of actual holders the pope disposed of the same bishopric four or five times over, receiving each time the first-fruits. "The brokers of the sinful city of Rome promote for money unlearned and unworthy caitiffs to benefices of the value of a thousand marks, while the poor and learned hardly obtain one of twenty. So decays sound learning. They present aliens who neither see nor care to see their parishioners, despise God's services, convey away the treasure of the realm, and are worse than Jews or Saracens. The pope's revenue from England alone is larger than that of any prince in Christendom. God gave his sheep to be pastured, not to be shaven and shorn." The grievances were no trifling ones. At this very time the deaneries of Lichfield, Salisbury, and York, the archdeaconry of Canterbury, which was reputed the wealthiest English benefice, together with a host of prebends and preferments, were held by Italian cardinals and priests, while the pope's collector from his office in London sent twenty thousand marks a year to the papal treasury.

If extortion and tyranny such as this severed the English clergy from the papacy, their own selfishness severed them from the nation at large. Immense as was their wealth, they bore as little as they could of the common burdens of the realm. They were still resolute to assert their exemption from the common justice of the land, and the mild punishments of the ecclesiastical courts carried little dismay into the mass of disorderly clerks. Privileged as they were against all interference from the lay world without, the clergy penetrated by their control over wills, contracts, divorce, by the dues they exacted, as well as by directly religious offices, into the very heart of the social life around them. No figure was better known or more hated than the summoner who enforced the jurisdiction and levied the dues of their courts. On the other hand, their moral authority was rapidly passing away; the wealthiest churchmen, with curled hair and hanging sleeves, aped the costume of the knightly society to which they really belonged. We have already seen the general impression of their worldliness in Chaucer's picture of the hunting monk and the courtly prioress with her love-motto on her brooch. Over the vice of the higher classes they exerted

no influence whatever; the king paraded his mistress as a queen of beauty through London, the nobles blazoned their infamy in court and tournament. "In those days," says a chronicler of the time, "arose a great rumor and clamor among the people, that wherever there was a tournament there came a great concourse of ladies of the most costly and beautiful, but not of the best, in the kingdom, sometimes forty or fifty in number, as if they were a part of the tournament, in diverse and wonderful male apparel, in party-colored tunics, with short caps and bands wound cord-wise round their head, and girdles bound with gold and silver, and daggers in pouches across their body, and then they proceeded on chosen coursers to the place of tourney, and so expended and wasted their goods and vexed their bodies with scurrilous wantonness that the rumor of the people sounded everywhere; and thus they neither feared God nor blushed at the chaste voice of the people." They were not called on to blush at the chaste voice of the Church. The clergy were in fact rent by their own dissensions. The higher prelates were busy with the cares of political office, and severed from the lower priesthood by the scandalous inequality between the revenues of the wealthier ecclesiastics and the "poor parson" of the country. A bitter hatred divided the secular clergy from the regular; and this strife went fiercely on in the universities. Fitz-Ralf, the chancellor of Oxford, attributed to the friars the decline in the number of academical students, and the university checked by statute their admission of mere children into their orders. The older religious orders in fact had sunk into mere landowners, while the enthusiasm of the friars had in great part died away and left a crowd of impudent mendicants behind it. Wyclif could soon with general applause denounce them as sturdy beggars, and declare that "the man who gives alms to a begging friar is ipso facto excommunicate."

Without the ranks of the clergy stood a world of earnest men, who, like "Piers the Plowman," denounced their worldliness and vice, skeptics like Chaucer laughing at the jingling bells of their hunting abbots, and the brutal and greedy baronage under John of Gaunt, eager to drive the prelates from office and to seize on their wealth. Worthless as the last party seems to us, it was with John of Gaunt that Wyclif

allied himself in his effort for the reform of the Church. As yet his quarrel was not with the doctrines of Rome but with its practise, and it was on the principles of Ockham that he defended the Parliament's indignant refusal of the "tribute" which was claimed by the papacy. But his treatise on "The Kingdom of God" ("De Dominio Divino") shows how different his aims really were from the selfish aims of the men with whom he acted. In this, the most famous of his works, Wyclif bases his action on a distinct ideal of society. All authority, to use his own expression, is "founded in grace." Dominion in the highest sense is in God alone; it is God who, as the suzerain of the universe, deals out His rule in fief to rulers in their various stations on tenure of their obedience to Himself. It was easy to object that in such a case "dominion" could never exist, since mortal sin is a breach of such a tenure, and all men sin. But, as Wyclif urged it, the theory is a purely ideal one. In actual practise he distinguishes between dominion and power, power which the wicked may have by God's permission, and to which the Christian must submit from motives of obedience to God. In his own scholastic phrase, so strangely perverted afterwards, here on earth "God must obey the devil." But whether in the ideal or practical view of the matter, all power or dominion was of God. It was granted by Him not to one person, His vicar on earth, as the papacy alleged, but to all. The king was as truly God's vicar as the pope. The royal power was as sacred as the ecclesiastical, and as complete over temporal things, even the temporalities of the Church, as that of the Church over spiritual things. On the question of Church and State therefore the distinction between the ideal and practical view of "dominion" was of little account. Wyclif's application of the theory to the individual conscience was of far higher and wider importance. Obedient as each Christian might be to king or priest, he himself, as a possessor of "dominion," held immediately of God. The throne of God Himself was the tribunal of personal appeal. What the reformers of the sixteenth century attempted to do by their theory of Justification by Faith, Wyclif attempted to do by his theory of "dominion." It was a theory which in establishing a direct relation between man and God swept away

the whole basis of a mediating priesthood on which the medieval Church was built; but for a time its real drift was hardly perceived. To Wyclif's theory of Church and State, his subjection of their temporalities to the Crown, his contention that like other property they might be seized and employed for national purposes, his wish for their voluntary abandonment and the return of the Church to its original poverty, the clergy were more sensitive. They were bitterly galled when he came forward as the theological bulwark of the Lancastrian party at a time when they were writhing under the attack on Wykeham by the nobles; and in the prosecution of Wyclif, they resolved to return blow for blow. He was summoned before Bishop Courtenay of London to answer for his heretical propositions concerning the wealth of the Church. The Duke of Lancaster accepted the challenge as really given to himself, and stood by Wyclif's side in the Consistory Court at St. Paul's. But no trial took place. Fierce words passed between the nobles and the prelate; the duke himself was said to have threatened to drag Courtenay out of the church by the hair of his head, and at last the London populace, to whom John of Gaunt was hateful, burst in to their bishop's rescue, and Wyclif's life was saved with difficulty by the aid of the soldiery. But his courage only grew with the danger. A papal bull which was procured by the bishops, directing the university to condemn and arrest him, extorted from him a bold defiance. In a defense circulated widely through the kingdom and laid before Parliament, Wyclif broadly asserted that no man could be excommunicated by the pope "unless he were first excommunicated by himself." He denied the right of the Church to exact or defend temporal privileges by spiritual censures, declared that a Church might justly be deprived by the king or lay lords of its property for defect of duty, and defended the subjection of ecclesiastics to civil tribunals. Bold as the defiance was, it won the support of the people and of the Crown. When he appeared at the close of the year in Lambeth Chapel to answer the archbishop's summons, a message from the court forbade the primate to proceed, and the Londoners broke in and dissolved the session.

Wyclif was still working hand in hand with John of Gaunt

in advocating his plans of ecclesiastical reform, when the great insurrection of the peasants, which we shall soon have to describe, broke out under Wat Tyler. In a few months the whole of his work was undone. Not only was the power of the Lancastrian party on which Wyclif had relied for the moment annihilated, but the quarrel between the baronage and the Church, on which his action had hitherto been grounded, was hushed in the presence of a common danger. His "poor preachers" were looked on as missionaries of socialism. The friars charged him with being a "sower of strife, who by his serpent-like instigation has set the serf against his lord," and though Wyclif tossed back the charge with disdain, he had to bear a suspicion which was justified by the conduct of some of his followers. John Ball, who had figured in the front rank of the revolt, was claimed as one of his adherents, and was alleged to have denounced in his last hour the conspiracy of the "Wyclifites." His most prominent scholar, Nicholas Herford, was said to have openly approved the brutal murder of Archbishop Sudbury. Whatever belief such charges might gain, it is certain that from this moment all plans for the reorganization of the Church were confounded in the general odium which attached to the projects of the peasant leaders, and that any hope of ecclesiastical reform at the hands of the baronage and the Parliament was at an end. But even if the Peasant Revolt had not deprived Wyclif of the support of the aristocratic party, with whom he had hitherto cooperated, their alliance must have been dissolved by the new theological position which he had already taken up. Some months before the outbreak of the insurrection, he had by one memorable step passed from the position of a reformer of the discipline and political relations of the Church to that of a protester against its cardinal beliefs. If there was one doctrine upon which the supremacy of the medieval Church rested, it was the doctrine of Transubstantiation. It was by his exclusive right to the performance of the miracle which was wrought in the mass that the lowliest priest was raised high above princes. With the formal denial of the doctrine of Transubstantiation which Wyclif issued in the spring of 1381 began that great movement of revolt which ended, more than a century after, in

the establishment of religious freedom, by severing the mass of the Teutonic peoples from the general body of the Catholic Church. The act was the bolder that he stood utterly alone. The university, in which his influence had been hitherto all-powerful, at once condemned him. John of Gaunt enjoined him to be silent. Wyclif was presiding as Doctor of Divinity over some disputations in the schools of the Augustinian Canons when his academical condemnation was publicly read, but though startled for the moment he at once challenged chancellor or doctor to disprove the conclusions at which he had arrived. The prohibition of the Duke of Lancaster he met by an open avowal of his teaching, a confession which closes proudly with the quiet words, "I believe that in the end the truth will conquer." For the moment his courage dispelled the panic around him. The university responded to his appeal, and by displacing his opponents from office tacitly adopted his cause. But Wyclif no longer looked for support to the learned or wealthier classes, on whom he had hitherto relied. He appealed, and the appeal is memorable as the first of such a kind in our history, to England at large. With an amazing industry he issued tract after tract in the tongue of the people itself. The dry, syllogistic Latin, the abstruse and involved argument, which the great doctor had addressed to his academic hearers, were suddenly flung aside, and by a transition which marks the wonderful genius of the man the schoolman was transformed into the pamphleteer. If Chaucer is the father of our later English poetry, Wyclif is the father of our later English prose. The rough, clear, homely English of his tracts, the speech of the plowman and the trader of the day, though colored with the picturesque phraseology of the Bible, is in its literary use as distinctly a creation of his own as the style in which he embodied it, the terse vehement sentences, the stinging sarcasms, the hard antitheses, which roused the dullest mind like a whip. Once fairly freed from the trammels of unquestioning belief, Wyclif's mind worked fast in its career of skepticism. Pardons, indulgences, absolutions, pilgrimages to the shrines of the saints, worship of their images, worship of the saints themselves, were successively denied. A formal appeal to the Bible as the one

ground of faith, coupled with an assertion of the right of every instructed man to examine the Bible for himself, threatened the very groundwork of the older dogmatism with ruin. Nor were these daring denials confined to the small circle of the scholars who still clung to him; with the practical ability which is so marked a feature of his character, Wyclif had organized some few years before an order of poor preachers, "the Simple Priests," whose coarse sermons and long russet dress moved the laughter of the clergy, but who now formed a priceless organization for the diffusion of their master's doctrines. How rapid their progress must have been we may see from the panic-struck exaggerations of their opponents. A few years later they complained that the followers of Wyclif abounded everywhere and in all classes, among the baronage, in the cities, among the peasantry of the countryside, even in the monastic cell itself. "Every second man one meets is a Lollard."

"Lollard," a word which probably means "idle babbler," was the nickname of scorn with which the orthodox churchmen chose to insult their assailants. But this rapid increase changed their scorn into vigorous action. Courtenay, now become archbishop, summoned a council at Blackfriars, and formally submitted twenty-four propositions drawn from Wyclif's works. An earthquake in the midst of the proceedings terrified every prelate but the resolute primate; the expulsion of ill humors from the earth, he said, was of good omen for the expulsion of ill humors from the Church; and the condemnation was pronounced. Then the archbishop turned fiercely upon Oxford as the fount and center of the new heresies. In an English sermon at St. Frideswide's, Nicholas Herford had asserted the truth of Wyclif's doctrines; and Courtenay ordered the chancellor to silence him and his adherents on pain of being himself treated as a heretic. The chancellor fell back on the liberties of the university, and appointed as preacher another Wyclifite, Repyngdon, who did not hesitate to style the Lollards "holy priests," and to affirm that they were protected by John of Gaunt. Party spirit meanwhile ran high among the students; the bulk of them sided with the Lollard leaders, and a Carmelite, Peter Stokes, who had procured the archbishop's

letters, cowered panic-stricken in his chamber while the chancellor, protected by an escort of a hundred townsmen, listened approvingly to Repyngdon's defiance. "I dare go no further," wrote the poor friar to the archbishop, "for fear of death"; but he soon mustered courage to descend into the schools where Repyngdon was now maintaining that the clerical order was "better when it was but nine years old than now that it has grown to a thousand years and more." The appearance, however, of scholars in arms again drove Stokes to fly in despair to Lambeth, while a new heretic in open Congregation maintained Wyclif's denial of Transubstantiation. "There is no idolatry," cried William James, "save in the Sacrament of the Altar." "You speak like a wise man," replied the chancellor, Robert Rygge. Courtenay however was not the man to bear defiance tamely, and his summons to Lambeth wrested a submission from Rygge which was only accepted on his pledge to suppress the Lollardism of the university. "I dare not publish them, on fear of death," exclaimed the chancellor when Courtenay handed him his letters of condemnation. "Then is your university an open *fautor* of heretics," retorted the primate, "if it suffers not the Catholic truth to be proclaimed within its bounds." The royal council supported the archbishop's injunction, but the publication of the decrees at once set Oxford on fire. The scholars threatened death against the friars, "crying that they wished to destroy the university." The masters suspended Henry Crump from teaching, as a troubler of the public peace, for calling the Lollards "heretics." The Crown however at last stepped roughly in to Courtenay's aid, and a royal writ ordered the instant banishment of all favorers of Wyclif, with the seizure and destruction of all Lollard books, on pain of forfeiture of the university's privileges. The threat produced its effect. Herford and Repyngdon appealed in vain to John of Gaunt for protection; the duke himself denounced them as heretics against the Sacrament of the Altar, and after much evasion they were forced to make a formal submission. Within Oxford itself the suppression of Lollardism was complete, but with the death of religious freedom all trace of intellectual life suddenly disappears. The century which followed the triumphs of Courtenay is the most barren in its

annals, nor was the sleep of the university broken till the advent of the New Learning restored to it some of the life and liberty which the primate had so roughly trodden out.

Nothing marks more strongly the grandeur of Wyclif's position as the last of the great schoolmen than the reluctance of so bold a man as Courtenay even after his triumph over Oxford to take extreme measures against the head of Lollardry. Wyclif, though summoned, had made no appearance before the "Council of the Earthquake." "Pontius Pilate and Herod are made friends to-day," was his bitter comment on the new union which proved to have sprung up between the prelates and the monastic orders who had so long been at variance with each other; "since they have made a heretic of Christ, it is an easy inference for them to count simple Christians heretics." He seems indeed to have been sick at the moment, but the announcement of the final sentence roused him to life again. "I shall not die," he is said to have cried at an earlier time when in grievous peril, "but live and declare the works of the friars." He petitioned the king and Parliament that he might be allowed freely to prove the doctrines he had put forth, and turning with characteristic energy to the attack of his assailants he asked that all religious vows might be suppressed, that tithes might be diverted to the maintenance of the poor and the clergy maintained by the free alms of their flocks, that the Statutes of Provisors and Præmunire might be enforced against the papacy, that churchmen might be declared incapable of secular offices, and imprisonment for excommunication cease. Finally, in the teeth of the council's condemnation, he demanded that the doctrine of the Eucharist which he advocated might be freely taught. If he appeared in the following year before the Convocation at Oxford, it was to perplex his opponents by a display of scholastic logic which permitted him to retire without any retractation of his sacramental heresy. For the time his opponents seemed satisfied with his expulsion from the university, but in his retirement at Lutterworth he was forging during these troubled years the great weapon which, wielded by other hands than his own, was to produce so terrible an effect on the triumphant hierarchy. An earlier translation of the Scriptures, in part of

which he was aided by his scholar Herford, was being revised and brought to the second form, which is better known as "Wyclif's Bible," when death drew near. The appeal of the prelates to Rome was answered at last by a brief ordering him to appear at the papal court. His failing strength exhausted itself in the cold sarcastic reply which explained that his refusal to comply with the summons simply sprang from broken health. "I am always glad," ran the ironical answer, "to explain my faith to any one, and above all to the Bishop of Rome; for I take it for granted that if it be orthodox he will confirm it, if it be erroneous he will correct it. I assume, too, that as chief vicar of Christ upon earth the Bishop of Rome is of all mortal men most bound to the law of Christ's Gospel, for among the disciples of Christ a majority is not reckoned by simply counting heads in the fashion of this world, but according to the imitation of Christ on either side. Now Christ during His life upon earth was of all men the poorest, casting from Him all worldly authority. I deduce from these premises, as a simple counsel of my own, that the pope should surrender all temporal authority to the civil power and advise his clergy to do the same." The boldness of his words sprang perhaps from a knowledge that his end was near. The terrible strain on energies enfeebled by age and study had at last brought its inevitable result, and a stroke of paralysis while Wyclif was hearing mass in his parish church of Lutterworth was followed on the next day by his death.

Section IV. — The Peasant Revolt, 1377–1381

The religious revolution which we have been describing gave fresh impulse to a revolution of even greater importance, which had for a long time been changing the whole face of the country. The manorial system, on which the social organization of every rural part of England rested, had divided the land, for the purposes of cultivation and of internal order, into a number of large estates; a part of the soil was usually retained by the owner of the manor as his demesne or home farm, while the remainder was distributed among tenants who were bound to render service to their

lord. Under the kings of Ælfred's house, the number of absolute slaves, and the number of freemen, had alike diminished. The slave class, never numerous, had been reduced by the efforts of the Church, perhaps by the general convulsion of the Danish wars. But these wars had often driven the ceorl or freeman to "commend" himself to a thegn who pledged him his protection in consideration of a labor payment. It is probable that these dependent ceorls are the "villeins" of the Norman epoch, men sunk indeed from pure freedom and bound both to soil and lord, but as yet preserving much of their older rights, retaining their land, free as against all men but their lord, and still sending representatives to hundred-mote and shire-mote. They stood therefore far above the "landless man," the man who had never possessed even under the old constitution political rights, whom the legislation of the English kings had forced to attach himself to a lord on pain of outlawry, and who served as household servant or as hired laborer, or at the best as rent-paying tenant of land which was not his own. The Norman knight or lawyer however saw little distinction between these classes; and the tendency of legislation under the Angevins was to blend all in a single class of serfs. While the pure "theow" or absolute slave disappeared, therefore, the ceorl or villein sank lower in the social scale. But though the rural population was undoubtedly thrown more together and fused into a more homogeneous class, its actual position corresponded very imperfectly with the view of the lawyers. All indeed were dependents on a lord. The manor-house became the center of every English village. The manor-court was held in its hall; it was here that the lord or his steward received homage, recovered fines, held the view of frank-pledge, or enrolled the villagers in their tithing. Here too, if the lord possessed criminal jurisdiction, was held his justice court, and without its doors stood his gallows. Around it lay the demesne or home farm, and the cultivation of this rested wholly with the "villeins" of the manor. It was by them that the great barn of the lord was filled with sheaves, his sheep shorn, his grain malted, the wood hewn for his hall fire. These services were the labor rent by which they held their lands, and it was the nature and extent of this labor

rent which parted one class of the population from another. The "villein," in the strict sense of the word, was bound only to gather in his lord's harvest and to aid in the plowing and sowing of autumn and Lent. The cottar, the bordar, and the laborer were bound to help in the work of the home farm throughout the year. But these services and the time of rendering them were strictly limited by custom, not only in the case of the cearl or villein, but in that of the originally meaner "landless man." The possession of his little homestead with the ground around it, the privilege of turning out his cattle on the waste of the manor, passed quietly and insensibly from mere indulgences that could be granted or withdrawn at a lord's caprice into rights that could be pleaded at law. The number of teams, the fines, the reliefs, the services, that a lord could claim, at first mere matter of oral tradition, came to be entered on the court roll of the manor, a copy of which became the title-deed of the villein. It was to this that he owed the name of "copyholder" which at a later time superseded his older title. Disputes were settled by a reference to this roll or on oral evidence of the custom at issue, but a social arrangement which was eminently characteristic of the English spirit of compromise generally secured a fair adjustment of the claims of villein and lord. It was the duty of the lord's bailiff to exact their due services from the villeins, but his coadjutor in this office, the reeve or foreman of the manor, was chosen by the tenants themselves and acted as representative of their interests and rights.

The first disturbances of the system of tenure which we have described sprang from the introduction of leases. The lord of the manor, instead of cultivating the demesne through his own bailiff, often found it more convenient and profitable to let the manor to a tenant at a given rent, payable either in money or in kind. Thus we find the manor of Sandon leased by the Chapter of St. Paul's at a very early period on a rent which comprised the payment of grain both for bread and ale, of alms to be distributed at the cathedral door, of wood to be used in its bakehouse and brewery, and of money to be spent in wages. It is to this system of leasing, or rather to the usual term for the rent it entailed (feorm, from the

Latin *firma*), that we owe the words "farm" and "farmer," the growing use of which marks the first step in the rural revolution which we are examining. It was a revolution which made little direct change in the manorial system, but its indirect effect in breaking the tie on which the feudal organization of the manor rested, that of the tenant's personal dependence on his lord, and in affording an opportunity by which the wealthier among the tenantry could rise to a position of apparent equality with their older masters and form a new class intermediate between the larger proprietors and the customary tenants, was of the highest importance. This earlier step, however, in the modification of the manorial system, by the rise of the farmer class, was soon followed by one of a far more serious character in the rise of the free laborer. Labor, whatever right it might have attained in other ways, was as yet in the strictest sense bound to the soil. Neither villein nor serf had any choice, either of a master or of a sphere of toil. He was born, in fact, to his holding and to his lord; he paid head-money for license to remove from the estate in search of trade or hire, and a refusal to return on recall by his owner would have ended in his pursuit as a fugitive outlaw. But the advance of society and the natural increase of population had for a long time been silently freeing the laborer from this local bondage. The influence of the Church had been exerted in promoting emancipation, as a work of piety, on all estates but its own. The fugitive bondsman found freedom in a flight to chartered towns, where a residence during a year and a day conferred franchise. A fresh step towards freedom was made by the growing tendency to commute labor services for money payments. The population was slowly increasing, and as the law of gavelkind which was applicable to all landed estates not held by military tenure divided the inheritance of the tenantry equally among their sons, the holding of each tenant and the services due from it became divided in a corresponding degree. A labor rent thus became more difficult to enforce, while the increase of wealth among the tenantry, and the rise of a new spirit of independence, made it more burdensome to those who rendered it. It was probably from this cause that the commutation of the arrears of labor for a money

payment, which had long prevailed on every estate, gradually developed into a general commutation of services. We have already witnessed the silent progress of this remarkable change in the case of St. Edmundsbury, but the practise soon became universal, and "malt silver," "wood silver," and "larder silver," gradually took the place of the older personal services on the court rolls. The process of commutation was hastened by the necessities of the lords themselves. The luxury of the castle hall, the splendor and pomp of chivalry, the cost of campaigns, drained the purses of knight and baron, and the sale of freedom to a serf or exemption from services to a villein afforded an easy and tempting mode of refilling them. In this process even kings took part. Edward the Third sent commissioners to royal estates for the especial purpose of selling manumissions to the king's serfs; and we still possess the names of those who were enfranchised with their families by a payment of hard cash in aid of the exhausted Exchequer.

By this entire detachment of the serf from actual dependence on the land, the manorial system was even more radically changed than by the rise of the serf into a copyholder. The whole social condition of the country, in fact, was modified by the appearance of a new class. The rise of the free laborer had followed that of the farmer, labor was no longer bound to one spot or one master: it was free to hire itself to what employer, and to choose what field of employment, it would. At the moment we have reached, in fact, the lord of a manor had been reduced over a large part of England to the position of a modern landlord, receiving a rental in money from his tenants, and dependent for the cultivation of his own demesne on paid laborers. But a formidable difficulty now met the landowners who had been driven by the process of enfranchisement to rely on hired labor. Hitherto this supply had been abundant and cheap; but this abundance suddenly disappeared. The most terrible plague which the world ever witnessed advanced at this juncture from the East, and after devastating Europe from the shores of the Mediterranean to the Baltic, swooped at the close of 1348 upon Britain. The traditions of its destructiveness, and the panic-struck words of the statutes which followed it, have

been more than justified by modern research. Of the three or four millions who then formed the population of England, more than one half were swept away in its repeated visitations. Its ravages were fiercest in the greater towns, where filthy and undrained streets afforded a constant haunt to leprosy and fever. In the burial-ground which the piety of Sir Walter Maunay purchased for the citizens of London, a spot whose site was afterwards marked by the Charter House, more than fifty thousand corpses are said to have been interred. Thousands of people perished at Norwich, while in Bristol the living were hardly able to bury the dead. But the Black Death fell on the villages almost as fiercely as on the towns. More than one half of the priests of Yorkshire are known to have perished; in the diocese of Norwich two thirds of the parishes changed their incumbents. The whole organization of labor was thrown out of gear. The scarcity of hands made it difficult for the minor tenants to perform the services due for their lands, and only a temporary abandonment of half the rent by the landowners induced the farmers to refrain from the abandonment of their farms. For a time cultivation became impossible. "The sheep and cattle strayed through the fields and corn," says a contemporary, "and there were none left who could drive them." Even when the first burst of panic was over, the sudden rise of wages consequent on the enormous diminution in the supply of free labor, though accompanied by a corresponding rise in the price of food, rudely disturbed the course of industrial employments; harvests rotted on the ground, and fields were left untilled, not merely from scarcity of hands, but from the strife which now for the first time revealed itself between capital and labor.

While the landowners of the country and the wealthier craftsmen of the town were threatened with ruin by what seemed to their age the extravagant demands of the new labor class, the country itself was torn with riot and disorder. The outbreak of lawless self-indulgence which followed everywhere in the wake of the plague told especially upon the "landless men," wandering in search of work, and for the first time masters of the labor market; and the wandering laborer or artisan turned easily into the "sturdy beggar," or

the bandit of the woods. A summary redress for these evils was at once provided by the Crown in a royal ordinance which was subsequently embodied in the Statute of Laborers. "Every man or woman," runs this famous provision, "of whatsoever condition, free or bond, able in body, and within the age of threescore years, . . . and not having of his own whereof he may live, nor land of his own about the tillage of which he may occupy himself, and not serving any other, shall be bound to serve the employer who shall require him to do so, and shall take only the wages which were accustomed to be taken in the neighborhood where he is bound to serve" two years before the plague began. A refusal to obey was punished by imprisonment. But sterner measures were soon found to be necessary. Not only was the price of labor fixed by Parliament in the Statute of 1351, but the labor class was once more tied to the soil. The laborer was forbidden to quit the parish where he lived in search of better-paid employment; if he disobeyed he became a "fugitive," and subject to imprisonment at the hands of the justices of the peace. To enforce such a law literally must have been impossible, for corn had risen to so high a price that a day's labor at the old wages would not have purchased wheat enough for a man's support. But the landowners did not flinch from the attempt. The repeated reenactment of the law shows the difficulty of applying it and the stubbornness of the struggle which it brought about. The fines and forfeitures which were levied for infractions of its provisions formed a large source of royal revenue, but so ineffectual were the original penalties that the runaway laborer was at last ordered to be branded with a hot iron on the forehead, while the harboring of serfs in towns was rigorously put down. Nor was it merely the existing class of free laborers which was attacked by this reactionary movement. The increase of their numbers by a commutation of labor services for money payments was suddenly checked, and the ingenuity of the lawyers who were employed as stewards of each manor was exercised in striving to restore to the landowners that customary labor whose loss was now severely felt. Manumissions and exemptions which had passed without question were canceled on the grounds of informality, and labor services from which

they held themselves freed by redemption were again demanded from the villeins. The attempt was the more galling that the cause had to be pleaded in the manor-court itself, and to be decided by the very officer whose interest it was to give judgment in favor of his lord. We can see the growth of a fierce spirit of resistance through the statutes which strove in vain to repress it. In the towns, where the system of forced labor was applied with even more rigor than in the country, strikes and combinations became frequent among the lower craftsmen. In the country the free laborers found allies in the villeins, whose freedom from manorial service was questioned. These were often men of position and substance, and throughout the eastern counties the gatherings of "fugitive serfs" were supported by an organized resistance and by large contributions of money on the part of the wealthier tenantry. A statute of later date throws light on their resistance. It tells us that "villeins and holders of lands in villeinage withdrew their customs and services from their lords, having attached themselves to other persons who maintained and abetted them; and who, under color of exemplifications from Domesday of the manors and villages where they dwelt, claimed to be quit of all manner of services, either of their body or of their lands, and would suffer no distress or other course of justice to be taken against them; the villeins aiding their maintainers by threatening the officers of their lords with peril to life and limb, as well by open assemblies as by confederacies to support each other." It would seem not only as if the villein was striving to resist the reactionary tendency of the lords of manors to regain his labor service, but that in the general overturning of social institutions the copyholder was struggling to become a freeholder, and the farmer to be recognized as proprietor of the demesne he held on lease.

A more terrible outcome of the general suffering was seen in a new revolt against the whole system of social inequality, which had till then passed unquestioned as the divine order of the world. The cry of the poor found a terrible utterance in the words of "a mad priest of Kent," as the courtly Froissart calls him, who for twenty years found audience for his sermons, in defiance of interdict and imprisonment, in the stout

yeomen who gathered in the Kentish churchyards. "Mad" as the landowners called him, it was in the preaching of John Ball that England first listened to a declaration of natural equality and the rights of man. "Good people," cried the preacher, "things will never go well in England so long as goods be not in common, and so long as there be villeins and gentlemen. By what right are they whom we call lords greater folk than we? On what grounds have they deserved it? Why do they hold us in serfage? If we all came of the same father and mother, of Adam and Eve, how can they say or prove that they are better than we, if it be not that they make us gain for them by our toil what they spend in their pride? They are clothed in velvet, and warm in their furs and their ermines, while we are covered with rags. They have wine and spices and fair bread; and we oat-cake and straw, and water to drink. They have leisure and fine houses; we have pain and labor, the rain and the wind in the fields. And yet it is of us and of our toil that these men hold their state." It was the tyranny of property that then as ever roused the defiance of socialism. A spirit fatal to the whole system of the Middle Ages breathed in the popular rhyme which condensed the leveling doctrine of John Ball: "When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?"

The rhyme was running from lip to lip when a fresh instance of public oppression fanned the smoldering discontent into a flame. Edward the Third died in a dishonored old age, robbed on his death-bed even of his finger-rings by the vile mistress to whom he had clung; and the accession of the child of the Black Prince, Richard the Second, revived the hopes of what in a political sense we must still call the popular party in the Legislature. The Parliament of 1377 took up the work of reform, and boldly assumed the control of a new subsidy by assigning two of their number to regulate its expenditure: that of 1378 demanded and obtained an account of the mode in which the subsidy had been spent. But the real strength of Parliament was directed, as we have seen, to the desperate struggle in which the proprietary classes, whom they exclusively represented, were striving to reduce the laborer into a fresh serfage. Meanwhile the shame of defeat abroad was added to the misery and discord at home.

The French war ran its disastrous course: one English fleet was beaten by the Spaniards, a second sunk by a storm; and a campaign in the heart of France ended, like its predecessors, in disappointment and ruin. It was to defray the heavy expenses of the war that the Parliament of 1380 renewed a grant made three years before, to be raised by means of a poll-tax on every person in the realm. The tax brought under contribution a class which had hitherto escaped, men such as the laborer, the village smith, the village tiler; it goaded into action precisely the class which was already seething with discontent, and its exaction set England on fire from sea to sea. As spring went on quaint rhymes passed through the country, and served as summons to the revolt which soon extended from the eastern and midland counties over all England south of the Thames. "John Ball," ran one, "greeteth you all, and doth for to understand he hath rung your bell. Now right and might, will and skill, God speed every dele." "Help truth," ran another, "and truth shall help you! Now reigneth pride in price, and covetise is counted wise, and lechery withouten shame, and gluttony withouten blame. Envy reigneth with treason, and sloth is take in great season. God do bote, for now is tyme!" We recognize Ball's hand in the yet more stirring missives of "Jack the Miller" and "Jack the Carter." "Jack Miller asketh help to turn his mill aright. He hath grounden small, small: the King's Son of Heaven he shall pay for all. Look thy mill go aright with the four sailes, and the post stand with steadfastness. With right and with might, with skill and with will; let might help right, and skill go before will, and right before might, so goeth our mill aright." "Jack Carter," ran the companion missive, "prays you all that ye make a good end of that ye have begun, and do well, and aye better and better: for at the even men heareth the day." "Falseness and guile," sang Jack Trewman, "have reigned too long, and truth hath been set under a lock, and falseness and guile reigneth in every stock. No man may come truth to, but if he sing 'si dedero.' True love is away that was so good, and clerks for wealth work them woe. God do bote, for now is tyme." In the rude jingle of these lines began for England the literature of political controversy: they are

the first predecessors of the pamphlets of Milton and of Burke. Rough as they are, they express clearly enough the mingled passions which met in the revolt of the peasants: their longing for a right rule, for plain and simple justice; their scorn of the immorality of the nobles and the infamy of the court; their resentment at the perversion of the law to the cause of oppression. The revolt spread like wild-fire over the country; Norfolk and Suffolk, Cambridge and Hertfordshire rose in arms; from Sussex and Surrey the insurrection extended as far as Devon. But the actual outbreak began in Kent, where a tiler killed a tax-collector in vengeance for an outrage on his daughter. The county rose in arms. Canterbury, where "the whole town was of their mind," threw open its gates to the insurgents, who plundered the archbishop's palace and dragged John Ball from its prison, while a hundred thousand Kentish-men gathered round Wat Tyler of Essex and John Hales of Malling. In the eastern counties the levy of the poll-tax had already gathered crowds of peasants together, armed with clubs, rusty swords, and bows, and the royal commissioners sent to repress the tumult were driven from the field. While the Essex-men marched upon London on one side of the river, the Kentish-men marched on the other. Their grievance was mainly political, for villeinage was unknown in Kent; but as they poured on to Blackheath, every lawyer who fell into their hands was put to death; "not till all these were killed would the land enjoy its old freedom again," the peasants shouted as they fired the houses of the stewards and flung the records of the manor-courts into the flames. The whole population joined them as they marched along, while the nobles were paralyzed with fear. The young king — he was but a boy of fifteen — addressed them from a boat on the river; but the refusal of his council under the guidance of Archbishop Sudbury to allow him to land kindled the peasants to fury, and with cries of "Treason" the great mass rushed on London. Its gates were flung open by the poorer artisans within the city, and the stately palace of John of Gaunt at the Savoy, the new inn of the lawyers at the Temple, the houses of the foreign merchants, were soon in a blaze. But the insurgents, as they proudly boasted, were

"seekers of truth and justice, not thieves or robbers," and a plunderer found carrying off a silver vessel from the sack of the Savoy was flung with his spoil into the flames. The general terror was shown ludicrously enough on the following day, when a daring band of peasants, under Tyler himself, forced their way into the Tower, and taking the panic-stricken knights of the royal household in rough horse-play by the beard, promised to be their equals and good comrades in the time to come. But the horse-play changed into dreadful earnest when they found the king had escaped their grasp, and when Archbishop Sudbury and the prior of St. John were discovered in the chapel; the primate was dragged from his sanctuary and beheaded, and the same vengeance was wreaked on the treasurer and the chief commissioner for the levy of the hated poll-tax. Meanwhile the king had ridden from the Tower to meet the mass of the Essex-men, who had encamped without the city at Mile-end, while the men of Hertfordshire and St. Albans occupied Highbury. "I am your king and lord, good people," the boy began with a fearlessness which marked his bearing throughout the crisis; "what will ye?" "We will that you free us forever," shouted the peasants, "us and our lands; and that we be never named nor held for serfs." "I grant it," replied Richard; and he bade them go home, pledging himself at once to issue charters of freedom and amnesty. A shout of joy welcomed the promise. Throughout the day more than thirty clerks were busied writing letters of pardon and emancipation, and with these the mass of the Essex and Hertfordshire men withdrew quietly to their homes. It was with such a charter that William Grindecobbe returned to St. Albans, and, breaking at the head of the burghers into the abbey precincts, summoned the abbot to deliver up the charters which bound the town in bondage to his house. But a more striking proof of servitude remained in the millstones, which after a long suit at law had been adjudged to the abbey and placed within its cloister as a triumphant witness that no townsman might grind corn within the domain of the abbey save at the abbot's will. Bursting into the cloister the burghers now tore the millstones from the floor, and broke them into small pieces, "like blessed bread

in church," so that each might have something to show of the day when their freedom was won again.

Many of the Kentish-men dispersed at the news of the king's pledge to the men of Essex, but thirty thousand men still surrounded Wat Tyler when Richard by a mere chance encountered him the next morning at Smithfield. Hot words passed between his train and the peasant leader, who advanced to confer with the king; and a threat from Tyler brought on a brief struggle in which the Mayor of London, William Walworth, struck him with his dagger to the ground. "Kill, kill," shouted the crowd, "they have slain our captain." "What need ye, my masters?" cried the boy king, as he rode boldly to the front, "I am your captain and your king! Follow me." The hopes of the peasants centered in the young sovereign: one aim of their rising had been to free him from the evil counselors who, as they believed, abused his youth, and they now followed him with a touching loyalty and trust till he entered the Tower. His mother welcomed him with tears of joy. "Rejoice and praise God," the boy answered, "for I have recovered to-day my heritage which was lost, and the realm of England." But he was compelled to give the same pledge of freedom as at Mile-end, and it was only after receiving his letters of pardon and emancipation that the Kentish-men dispersed to their homes. The revolt, indeed, was far from being at an end. South of the Thames it spread as far as Devonshire; there were outbreaks in the north; the eastern counties were in one wild turmoil of revolt. A body of peasants occupied St. Albans. A maddened crowd forced the gates of St. Edmundsbury and wrested from the trembling monks pledges for the confirmation of the liberties of the town. John the Litster, a dyer of Norwich, headed a mass of peasants, under the title of King of the Commons, and compelled the nobles he captured to act as his meat tasters and to serve him on their knees during his repast. But the withdrawal of the peasant armies with their letters of emancipation gave courage to the nobles. The warlike Bishop of Norwich fell lance in hand on Litster's camp, and scattered the peasants of Norfolk at the first shock, while the king, with an army of 40,000 men, spread terror by the ruthlessness of his executions as he marched in triumph through Kent and

Essex. At Waltham he was met by the display of his own recent charters and a protest from the Essex-men that "they were so far as freedom went the peers of their lords." But they were to learn the worth of a king's word. "Villeins you were," answered Richard, "and villeins you are. In bondage you shall abide, and that not your old bondage, but a worse!" But the stubborn resistance which he met showed the temper of the people. The villagers of Billericay threw themselves into the woods and fought two hard fights before they were reduced to submission. It was only by threats of death that verdicts of guilty could be wrung from the Essex jurors when the leaders of the revolt were brought before them. Grindecobbe was offered his life if he would persuade his followers at St. Albans to restore the charters they had wrung from the monks. He turned bravely to his fellow townsmen and bade them take no thought for his trouble. "If I die," he said, "I shall die for the cause of the freedom we have won, counting myself happy to end my life by such a martyrdom. Do then to-day as you would have done had I been killed yesterday." But the stubborn will of the conquered was met by as stubborn a will in their conquerors. Through the summer and autumn seven thousand men are said to have perished on the gallows or the field. The royal council indeed showed its sense of the danger of a mere policy of resistance by submitting the question of enfranchisement to the Parliament which assembled on the suppression of the revolt, with words which suggested a compromise. "If you desire to enfranchise and set at liberty the said serfs," ran the royal message, "by your common assent, as the king has been informed that some of you desire, he will consent to your prayer." But no thoughts of compromise influenced the landowners in their reply. The king's grant and letters, the Parliament answered with perfect truth, were legally null and void: the serfs were their goods, and the king could not take their goods from them but by their own consent. "And this consent," they ended, "we have never given and never will give, were we all to die in one day."

Section V. — Richard the Second, 1381–1399

All the darker and sterner aspects of the age which we have been viewing, its social revolt, its moral and religious awakening, the misery of the poor, the protest of the Lollard, are painted with a terrible fidelity in the poem of William Langland. Nothing brings more vividly home to us the social chasm which in the fourteenth century severed the rich from the poor than the contrast between the "Complaint of Piers the Plowman" and the "Canterbury Tales." The world of wealth and ease and laughter through which the courtly Chaucer moves with eyes downcast as in a pleasant dream is a far-off world of wrong and of ungodliness to the gaunt poet of the poor. Born probably in Shropshire, where he had been put to school and received minor orders as a clerk, "Long Will," as Langland was nicknamed for his tall stature, found his way at an early age to London, and earned a miserable livelihood there by singing "placebos" and "diriges" in the stately funerals of his day. Men took the moody clerk for a madman; his bitter poverty quickened the defiant pride that made him loth — as he tells us — to bow to the gay lords and dames who rode decked in silver and minivere along the Cheap, or to exchange a "God save you" with the law sergeants as he passed their new house in the Temple. His world is the world of the poor: he dwells on the poor man's life, on his hunger and toil, his rough revelry and his despair, with the narrow intensity of a man who has no outlook beyond it. The narrowness, the misery, the monotony, of the life he paints reflect themselves in his verse. It is only here and there that a love of nature or a grim earnestness of wrath quickens his rhyme into poetry; there is not a gleam of the bright human sympathy of Chaucer, of his fresh delight in the gaiety, the tenderness, the daring of the world about him, of his picturesque sense of even its coarsest contrasts, of his delicate irony, of his courtly wit. The cumbrous allegory, the tedious platitudes, the rhymed texts from Scripture, which form the staple of Longland's work, are only broken here and there by phrases of a shrewd common sense, by bitter outbursts, by pictures of a broad Hogarthian humor. What chains one to the poem is its deep undertone of sadness: the

world is out of joint and the gaunt rhymer who stalks silently along the Strand has no faith in his power to put it right. His poem covers indeed an age of shame and suffering such as England had never known, for if its first brief sketch appeared two years after the peace of Brétigny its completion may be dated at the close of the reign of Edward the Third, and its final issue preceded but by a single year the Peasant Revolt. Londoner as he is, Will's fancy flies far from the sin and suffering of the great city to a May morning in the Malvern Hills. "I was wery forwandered and went me to rest under a broad bank by a burn side, and as I lay and leaned and looked in the water I slumbered in a sleeping, it sweyved (sounded) so merry." Just as Chaucer gathers the typical figures of the world he saw into his pilgrim train, so the dreamer gathers into a wide field his army of traders and chafferers, of hermits and solitaries, of minstrels, "japers and jinglers," bidders and beggars, plowmen that "in setting and in sowing swonken (toil) full hard," pilgrims "with their wenches after," weavers and laborers, burgess and bondman, lawyer and scrivener, court-haunting bishops, friars, and pardoners "parting the silver" with the parish priest. Their pilgrimage is not to Canterbury, but to Truth; their guide to Truth neither clerk nor priest but Peterkin the Plowman, whom they find plowing in his field. He it is who bids the knight no more wrest gifts from his tenant nor misdo with the poor. "Though he be thine underling here, well may hap in heaven that he be worthier set and with more bliss than thou. . . . For in charnel at church churles be evil to know, or a knight from a knave there." The gospel of equality is backed by the gospel of labor. The aim of the Plowman is to work, and to make the world work with him. He warns the laborer as he warns the knight. Hunger is God's instrument in bringing the idlest to toil, and Hunger waits to work her will on the idler and the waster. On the eve of the great struggle between wealth and labor Longland stands alone in his fairness to both, in his shrewd political and religious common sense. In the face of the popular hatred which was to gather round John of Gaunt, he paints the duke in a famous apologue as the cat who, greedy as she might be, at any rate keeps the noble rats from utterly devouring the mice of the

people. Though the poet is loyal to the Church, he proclaims a righteous life to be better than a host of indulgences, and God sends His pardon to Piers when priests dispute it. But he sings as a man conscious of his loneliness and without hope. It is only in a dream that he sees Corruption, "Lady Mede," brought to trial, and the world repenting at the preaching of Reason. In the waking life Reason finds no listeners. The poet himself is looked upon — he tells us bitterly — as a madman. There is a terrible despair in the close of his later poem, where the triumph of Christ is only followed by the reign of Antichrist; where Contrition slumbers amidst the revel of Death and Sin; and Conscience, hard beset by Pride and Sloth, rouses himself with a last effort, and seizing his pilgrim staff wanders over the world to find Piers Plowman.

The strife indeed which Longland would have averted raged only the fiercer after the repression of the Peasant Revolt. The Statutes of Laborers, effective as they proved in sowing hatred between employer and employed, between rich and poor, were powerless for their immediate ends, either in reducing the actual rate of wages or in restricting the mass of floating labor to definite areas of employment. During the century and a half after the Peasant Revolt villeinage died out so rapidly that it became a rare and antiquated thing. A hundred years after the Black Death the wages of an English laborer could purchase twice the amount of the necessaries of life which could have been obtained for the wages paid under Edward the Third. The statement is corroborated by the incidental descriptions of the life of the working classes which we find in Piers Plowman. Laborers, Longland tells us, "that have no land to live on but their hands disdained to live on penny ale or bacon, but demanded fresh flesh or fish, fried or baked, and that hot and hotter for chilling of their maw." The market was still in fact in the laborer's hands, in spite of statutes; "and but if he be highly hired else will he chide and wail the time that he was made a workman." The poet saw clearly that as population rose to its normal rate times such as these would pass away. "Whiles Hunger was their master here would none of them chide or strive against *his* statute, so sternly he looked: and I warn you, workmen, win

while ye may, for Hunger hitherward hasteth him fast." But even at the time when he wrote there were seasons of the year during which employment for the floating mass of labor was hard to find. In the long interval between harvest-tide and harvest-tide, work and food were alike scarce in the medieval homestead. "I have no penny," says Piers the Plowman in such a season, in lines which give us the picture of a farm of the day, "pullets for to buy, nor neither geese nor pigs, but two green cheeses, a few curds and cream, and an oaten cake, and two loaves of beans and bran baken for my children. I have no salt bacon, nor no cooked meat collops for to make, but I have parsley and leeks and many cabbage plants, and eke a cow and a calf, and a cart-mare to draw a-field my dung while the drought lasteth, and by this livelihood we must all live till Lammas-tide (August), and by that I hope to have harvest in my croft." But it was not till Lammas-tide that high wages and the new corn bade "Hunger go to sleep," and during the long spring and summer the free laborer, and the "waster that will not work but wander about, that will eat no bread but the finest wheat, nor drink but of the best and brownest ale," was a source of social and political danger. "He grieveth him against God and grudgeth against Reason, and then curseth he the king and all his council after such law to allow laborers to grieve." The terror of the landowners expressed itself in legislation which was a fitting sequel to the Statutes of Laborers. They forbade the child of any tiller of the soil to be apprenticed in a town. They prayed Richard to ordain "that no bondman or bondwoman shall place their children at school, as has been done, so as to advance their children in the world by their going into the Church." The new colleges which were being founded at the two Universities at this moment closed their gates upon villeins. It was the failure of such futile efforts to effect their aim which drove the energy of the great proprietors into a new direction, and in the end revolutionized the whole agricultural system of the country. Sheep farming required fewer hands than tillage, and the scarcity and high price of labor tended to throw more and more land into sheep farms. In the decrease of personal service, as villeinage died away, it became the interest of the lord to diminish the number of tenants on his estate as it had

been before his interest to maintain it, and he did this by massing the small allotments together into larger holdings. By this course of eviction the number of the free-labor class was enormously increased while the area of employment was diminished; and the social danger from vagabondage and the "sturdy beggar" grew every day greater till it brought about the despotism of the Tudors.

This social danger mingled with the yet more formidable religious peril which sprang from the party violence of the later Lollardry. The persecution of Courtenay had deprived the religious reform of its more learned adherents and of the support of the universities, while Wyclif's death had robbed it of its head at a moment when little had been done save a work of destruction. From that moment Lollardry ceased to be in any sense an organized movement, and crumbled into a general spirit of revolt. All the religious and social discontent of the times floated instinctively to this new center; the socialist dreams of the peasantry, the new and keener spirit of personal morality, the hatred of the friars, the jealousy of the great lords towards the prelacy, the fanaticism of the reforming zealot, were blended together in a common hostility to the Church and a common resolve to substitute personal religion for its dogmatic and ecclesiastical system. But it was this want of organization, this looseness and fluidity of the new movement, that made it penetrate through every class of society. Women as well as men became the preachers of the new sect. Lollardry had its own schools, its own books; its pamphlets were passed everywhere from hand to hand; scurrilous ballads which revived the old attacks of "Golias" in the Angevin times upon the wealth and luxury of the clergy were sung at every corner. Nobles, like the Earl of Salisbury, and at a later time Sir John Oldcastle, placed themselves openly at the head of the cause and threw open their gates as a refuge for its missionaries. London in its hatred of the clergy became fiercely Lollard, and defended a Lollard preacher who had ventured to advocate the new doctrines from the pulpit of St. Paul's. One of its mayors, John of Northampton, showed the influence of the new morality by the Puritan spirit in which he dealt with the morals of the city. Compelled to act, as he said, by the remissness of the

clergy, who connived for money at every kind of debauchery, he arrested the loose women, cut off their hair, and carted them through the streets as an object of public scorn. But the moral spirit of the new movement, though infinitely its grander side, was less dangerous to the Church than its open repudiation of the older doctrines and systems of Christendom. Out of the floating mass of opinion which bore the name of Lollardry one great faith gradually evolved itself, a faith in the sole authority of the Bible as a source of religious truth. The translation of Wyclif did its work. Scripture, complains a canon of Leicester, "became a vulgar thing, and more open to lay folk and women that knew how to read than it is wont to be to clerks themselves." Consequences which Wyclif had perhaps shrunk from drawing were boldly drawn by his disciples. The Church was declared to have become apostate, its priesthood was denounced as no priesthood, its sacraments as idolatry. It was in vain that the clergy attempted to stifle the new movement by their old weapon of persecution. The jealousy entertained by the baronage and gentry of every pretension of the Church to secular power foiled its efforts to make persecution effective. At the moment of the Peasant Revolt, Courtenay procured the enactment of a statute which commissioned the sheriffs to seize all persons convicted before the bishops of preaching heresy. But the statute was repealed in the next session, and the Commons added to the bitterness of the blow by their protest that they considered it "in nowise their interest to be more under the jurisdiction of the prelates or more bound by them than their ancestors had been in times past." Heresy indeed was still a felony by the common law, and if as yet we meet with no instances of the punishment of heretics by the fire it was because the threat of such a death was commonly followed by the recantation of the Lollard. But the restriction of each bishop's jurisdiction within the limits of his own diocese made it almost impossible to arrest the wandering preachers of the new doctrine, and the civil punishment — even if it had been sanctioned by public opinion — seems to have long fallen into desuetude. Experience proved to the prelates that few sheriffs would arrest on the mere warrant of an ecclesiastical officer, and that no royal court would issue the writ "for the burning

of a heretic" on a bishop's requisition. But powerless as the efforts of the Church were for purposes of repression, they were effective in rousing the temper of the Lollards into a bitter fanaticism. The Lollard teachers directed their fiercest invectives against the wealth and secularity of the great churchmen. In a formal petition to Parliament they mingled denunciations of the riches of the clergy with an open profession of disbelief in Transubstantiation, priesthood, pilgrimages, and image worship, and a demand, which illustrates the strange medley of opinions which jostled together in the new movement, that war might be declared unchristian, and that trades such as those of the goldsmith or the armorer, which were contrary to apostolical poverty, might be banished from the realm. They contended (and it is remarkable that a Parliament of the next reign adopted the statement) that from the superfluous revenues of the Church, if once they were applied to purposes of general utility, the king might maintain fifteen earls, fifteen hundred knights, and six thousand squires, besides endowing a hundred hospitals for the relief of the poor.

The distress of the landowners, the general disorganization of the country, in every part of which bands of marauders were openly defying the law, the panic of the Church and of society at large as the projects of the Lollards shaped themselves into more daring and revolutionary forms, added a fresh keenness to the national discontent at the languid and inefficient prosecution of the war. The junction of the French and Spanish fleets had made them masters of the seas; what fragments were left of Guienne lay at their mercy, and the northern frontier of England itself was flung open to France by the alliance of the Scots. The landing of a French force in the Forth roused the whole country to a desperate effort, and a large and well-equipped army of Englishmen penetrated as far as Edinburgh in the vain hope of bringing their enemy to battle. A more terrible blow had been struck in the reduction of Ghent by the French troops, and the loss of the one remaining market for English commerce; while the forces which should have been employed in saving it, and in the protection of the English shores against the threat of invasion, were squandered by John of Gaunt on the Spanish frontier in pursuit of a visionary crown, which he claimed in

his wife's right, the daughter of Pedro the Cruel. The enterprise showed that the duke had now abandoned the hope of directing affairs at home. Robert de Vere and Michael de la Pole, the Earl of Suffolk, had stood since the suppression of the revolt at the head of the royal councils, and their steady purpose was to drive the Duke of Lancaster from power. But the departure of John of Gaunt only called to the front his brother and his son, the Duke of Gloucester and the Earl of Derby; while the lukewarm prosecution of the war, the profuse expenditure of the court, and above all the manifest will of the king to free himself from parliamentary control, estranged the Lower House. The Parliament impeached Suffolk for corruption, and appointed a commission of regency for a year, of which Gloucester was the leading spirit. The attempt of the young king at the close of the session to reverse these measures was crushed by the appearance of Gloucester and his friends in arms; in the Merciless Parliament a charge of high treason hurried into exile or to death Suffolk with his supporters, the five judges who had pronounced the commission to be in itself illegal were banished, and four members of the royal household sent to the block. But hardly a year had passed when Richard found himself strong enough to break down by a word the government against which he had struggled so vainly. Entering the council he suddenly asked his uncle to tell him how old he was. "Your highness," replied Gloucester, "is in your twenty-fourth year." "Then I am old enough to manage my own affairs," said Richard coolly. "I have been longer under guardianship than any ward in my realm. I thank you for your past services, my lords, but I need them no longer."

For eight years the king wielded the power which thus passed quietly into his hands with singular wisdom and good fortune. On the one hand he carried his peace policy into effect by negotiations with France, which brought about a truce renewed year by year till it was prolonged in 1394 for four years, and this period of rest was lengthened for twenty-five years by a subsequent agreement on his marriage with Isabella, the daughter of Charles the Sixth. On the other he announced his resolve to rule by the advice of his Parliament, submitted to its censure, and consulted it on all matters

of importance. In a short campaign he pacified Ireland; and the Lollard troubles which had threatened during his absence died away on his return. But the brilliant abilities which Richard shared with the rest of the Plantagenets were marred by a fitful inconstancy, an insane pride, and a craving for absolute power. His uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, remained at the head of the opposition; while the king had secured the friendship of John of Gaunt, and of his son Henry, Earl of Derby. The readiness with which Richard seized on an opportunity of provoking a contest shows the bitterness with which during the long years that had passed since the flight of Suffolk he had brooded over his projects of vengeance. The Duke of Gloucester and the earls of Arundel and Warwick were arrested on a charge of conspiracy. A Parliament packed with royal partisans was used to crush Richard's opponents. The pardons granted nine years before were recalled; the commission of regency declared to have been illegal, and its promoters guilty of treason. The blow was ruthlessly followed up. The duke was saved from a trial by a sudden death in his prison at Calais; while his chief supporter, Arundel, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was impeached and banished, and the nobles of his party condemned to death and imprisonment. The measures introduced into the Parliament of the following year showed that besides his projects of revenge Richard's designs had widened into a definite plan of absolute government. It declared null the proceedings of the Parliament of 1388. He was freed from parliamentary control by the grant to him of a subsidy upon wool and leather for the term of his life. His next step got rid of Parliament itself. A committee of twelve peers and six commoners was appointed in Parliament, with power to continue their sittings after its dissolution and to "examine and determine all matters and subjects which had been moved in the presence of the king, with all the dependences of those not determined." The aim of Richard was to supersede by means of this permanent commission the body from which it originated: he at once employed it to determine causes and carry out his will, and forced from every tenant of the Crown an oath to recognize the validity of its acts and to oppose any attempts to alter or revoke them. With such an engine at

his command the king was absolute, and with the appearance of absolutism the temper of his reign suddenly changed. A system of forced loans, the sale of charters of pardon to Gloucester's adherents, the outlawry of seven counties at once on the plea that they had supported his enemies and must purchase pardon, a reckless interference with the course of justice, roused into new life the social and political discontent which was threatening the very existence of the Crown.

By his good government and by his evil government alike, Richard had succeeded in alienating every class of his subjects. He had estranged the nobles by his peace policy, the landowners by his refusal to sanction the insane measures of repression they directed against the laborer, the merchant class by his illegal exactions, and the Church by his want of zeal against the Lollards. Richard himself had no sympathy with the Lollards, and the new sect as a social danger was held firmly at bay. But the royal officers showed little zeal in aiding the bishops to seize or punish the heretical teachers, and Lollardry found favor in the very precincts of the court; it was through the patronage of Richard's first queen, Anne of Bohemia, that the tracts and Bible of the Reformer had been introduced into her native land, to give rise to the remarkable movement which found its earliest leaders in John Huss and Jerome of Prague. Richard stood almost alone in fact in his realm, but even this accumulated mass of hatred might have failed to crush him had not an act of jealousy and tyranny placed an able and unscrupulous leader at the head of the national discontent. Henry, Earl of Derby and Duke of Hereford, the eldest son of John of Gaunt, though he had taken part against his royal cousin in the earlier troubles of his reign, had loyally supported him in his recent measures against Gloucester. No sooner, however, were these measures successful than Richard turned his new power against the more dangerous House of Lancaster, and availing himself of a quarrel between the dukes of Hereford and Norfolk, in which each party bandied accusations of treason against the other, banished both from the realm. Banishment was soon followed by the annulling of leave which had been given to Henry to receive his inheritance on John of Gaunt's death, and the king himself seized the Lan-

castrian estates. At the moment when he had thus driven his cousin to despair, Richard crossed into Ireland to complete the work of conquest and organization which he had begun there; and Archbishop Arundel, an exile like himself, urged the duke to take advantage of the king's absence for the recovery of his rights. Eluding the vigilance of the French court, at which he had taken shelter, Henry landed with a handful of men on the coast of Yorkshire, where he was at once joined by the earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, the heads of the great houses of the Percies and the Nevilles; and, with an army which grew as he advanced, entered triumphantly into London. The Duke of York, whom the king had left regent, submitted, and his forces joined those of Henry; and when Richard landed at Milford Haven he found the kingdom lost. His own army dispersed as it landed, and the deserted king fled in disguise to North Wales, to find a second force which the Earl of Salisbury had gathered for his support already disbanded. Invited to a conference with the Duke of Lancaster at Flint, he saw himself surrounded by the rebel forces. "I am betrayed," he cried, as the view of his enemies burst on him from the hill; "there are pennons and banners in the valley." But it was too late for retreat. Richard was seized and brought before his cousin. "I am come before my time," said Lancaster, "but I will show you the reason. Your people, my lord, complain that for the space of twenty years you have ruled them harshly: however, if it please God, I will help you to rule them better." "Fair cousin," replied the king, "since it pleases you, it pleases me well." But Henry's designs went far beyond a share in the government of the realm. The Parliament which assembled in Westminster Hall received with shouts of applause a formal paper in which Richard resigned the Crown as one incapable of reigning and worthy for his great demerits to be deposed. The resignation was confirmed by a solemn Act of Deposition. The coronation oath was read, and a long impeachment, which stated the breach of the promises made in it, was followed by a solemn vote of both Houses which removed Richard from the state and authority of king. According to the strict rules of hereditary descent as construed by the feudal

lawyers, by an assumed analogy with the descent of ordinary estates, the Crown would now have passed to a house which had at an earlier period played a leading part in the revolutions of the Edwards. The great grandson of the Mortimer who brought about the deposition of Edward the Second had married the daughter and heiress of Lionel of Clarence, the third son of Edward the Third. The childlessness of Richard and the death of Edward's second son without issue placed Edmund, his grandson by this marriage, first among the claimants of the Crown; but he was a child of six years old, the strict rule of hereditary descent had never received any formal recognition in the case of the Crown, and precedent had established the right of Parliament to choose in such a case a successor among any other members of the royal house. Only one such successor was in fact possible. Rising from his seat and crossing himself, Henry of Lancaster solemnly challenged the Crown "as that I am descended by right line of blood coming from the good lord King Henry the Third, and through that right that God of His grace hath sent me with help of my kin and of my friends to recover it: the which realm was in point to be undone for default of governance and undoing of good laws." Whatever defects such a claim might present were more than covered by the solemn recognition of Parliament. The two archbishops, taking the new sovereign by the hand, seated him upon the throne, and Henry in emphatic words ratified the compact between himself and his people. "Sirs," he said to the prelates, lords, knights, and burgesses gathered round him, "I thank God and you, spiritual and temporal, and all estates of the land: and do you to wit it is not my will that any man think that by way of conquest I would disinherit any of his heritage, franchises, or other rights that he ought to have, nor put him out of the good that he has and has had by the good laws and customs of the realm, except those persons that have been against the good purpose and the common profit of the realm."

Section VI. — The House of Lancaster, 1399–1422

Raised to the throne by a Parliamentary revolution and resting its claims on a parliamentary title, the House of Lancaster was precluded by its very position from any resumption of the late struggle for independence on the part of the Crown which had culminated in the bold effort of Richard the Second. During no period of our early history were the powers of the two Houses so frankly recognized. The tone of Henry the Fourth till the very close of his reign is that of humble compliance with the prayers of the Parliament, and even his imperious successor shrank almost with timidity from any conflict with it. But the Crown had been bought by other pledges less noble than that of constitutional rule. The support of the nobles had been partly won by the hope of a renewal of the fatal war with France. The support of the Church had been purchased by the more terrible promise of persecution. The last pledge was speedily redeemed. In the first Convocation of his reign Henry declared himself the protector of the Church and ordered the prelates to take measures for the suppression of heresy and of the wandering preachers. His declaration was but a prelude to the Statute of Heresy which was passed at the opening of 1401. By the provisions of this infamous act the hindrances which had till now neutralized the efforts of the bishops were taken away. Not only were they permitted to arrest all preachers of heresy, all schoolmasters infected with heretical teaching, all owners and writers of heretical books, and to imprison them, even if they recanted, at the king's pleasure, but a refusal to abjure or a relapse after abjuration enabled them to hand over the heretic to the civil officers, and by these — so ran the first legal enactment of religious bloodshed which defiled our statute-book — he was to be burned on a high place before the people. The statute was hardly passed when William Sautre, a parish priest at Lynn, became its first victim. Nine years later a layman, John Badby, was committed to the flames in the presence of the Prince of Wales for a denial of Transubstantiation. The groans of the sufferer were taken for a recantation, and the prince ordered the fire to be plucked away; but the offer of life and of a pension failed to break

the spirit of the Lollard, and he was hurled back to his doom. The enmity of France, and the fierce resentment of the Reformers, added danger to the incessant revolts which threatened the throne of Henry. The mere maintenance of his power through the troubled years of his reign is the best proof of the king's ability. A conspiracy of Richard's kinsmen, the earls of Huntingdon and Kent, was suppressed, and was at once followed by Richard's death in prison. The Percies broke out in rebellion, and Hotspur, the son of the Earl of Northumberland, leagued himself with the Scots and with the insurgents of Wales. He was defeated and slain in an obstinate battle near Shrewsbury; but two years later his father rose in a fresh insurrection, and though the seizure and execution of his fellow conspirator Scrope, the Archbishop of York, drove Northumberland over the border, he remained till his death in a later inroad a peril to the throne. Encouraged meanwhile by the weakness of England, Wales, so long tranquil, shook off the yoke of her conquerors, and the whole country rose at the call of Owen Glyndwr or Glendower, a descendant of its native princes. Owen left the invaders, as of old, to contend with famine and the mountain storms; but they had no sooner retired than he sallied out from his inaccessible fastnesses to win victories which were followed by the adhesion of all North Wales and great part of the south to his cause, while a force of French auxiliaries was despatched by Charles of France to his aid. It was only the restoration of peace in England which enabled Henry to roll back the tide of Glyndwr's success. By slow and deliberate campaigns continued through four years the Prince of Wales wrested from him the south; his subjects in the north, discouraged by successive defeats, gradually fell away from his standard; and the repulse of a bold descent upon Shropshire drove Owen at last to take refuge among the mountains of Snowdon, where he seems to have maintained the contest, single-handed, till his death. With the close of the Welsh rising the Lancastrian throne felt itself secure from without, but the danger from the Lollards remained as great as ever within. The new statute and its terrible penalties were boldly defied. The death of the Earl of Salisbury in the first of the revolts against Henry, though his gory head was welcomed

into London by a procession of abbots and bishops who went out singing psalms of thanksgiving to meet it, only transferred the leadership of the party to one of the foremost warriors of the time. Sir John Oldcastle, whose marriage raised him to the title of Lord Cobham, threw open his castle of Cowling to the Lollards as their headquarters, sheltered their preachers, and set the prohibitions and sentences of the bishops at defiance. When Henry the Fourth died in 1413 worn out with the troubles of his reign, his successor was forced to deal with this formidable question. The bishops demanded that Cobham should be brought to justice, and though the king pleaded for delay in the case of one who was so close a friend, his open defiance at last forced him to act. A body of royal troops arrested Lord Cobham and carried him to the Tower. His escape was the signal for a vast revolt. A secret order summoned the Lollards to assemble in St. Giles's fields outside London. We gather, if not the real aims of the rising, at least the terror that it caused, from Henry's statement that its purpose was "to destroy himself, his brothers, and several of the spiritual and temporal lords"; but the vigilance of the young king prevented the junction of the Lollards of London with their friends in the country, and those who appeared at the place of meeting were dispersed by the royal forces. On the failure of the rising the law was rendered more rigorous. Magistrates were directed to arrest all Lollards and hand them over to the bishops; a conviction of heresy was made to entail forfeiture of blood and of estate; and thirty-nine prominent Lollards were brought to execution. Cobham escaped, and for four years longer strove to rouse revolt after revolt. He was at last captured on the Welsh border and burned as a heretic.

With the death of Oldcastle the political activity of Lollardry came suddenly to an end, while the steady persecution of the bishops, if it failed to extinguish it as a religious movement, succeeded in destroying the vigor and energy which it had shown at the outset of its career. But the House of Lancaster had, as yet, only partially accomplished the aims with which it mounted the throne. In the eyes of the nobles, one of Richard's crimes had been his policy of peace, and the aid which they gave to the revolution sprang partly from

their hope of a renewal of the war. The energy of the war party was seconded by the temper of the nation at large, already forgetful of the sufferings of the past struggle and longing only to wipe out its shame. The internal calamities of France offered at this moment a tempting opportunity for aggression. Its king, Charles the Sixth, was a maniac, while its princes and nobles were divided into two great parties, the one headed by the Duke of Burgundy and bearing his name, the other by the Duke of Orleans and bearing the title of Armagnacs. The struggle had been jealously watched by Henry the Fourth, but his attempt to feed it by pushing an English force into France at once united the combatants. Their strife, however, recommenced more bitterly than ever when the claim of the French crown by Henry the Fifth on his accession declared his purpose of renewing the war. No claim could have been more utterly baseless, for the parliamentary title by which the House of Lancaster held England could give it no right over France, and the strict law of hereditary succession which Edward asserted could be pleaded, if pleaded at all, only by the House of Mortimer. Not only the claim, indeed, but the very nature of the war itself was wholly different from that of Edward the Third. Edward had been forced into the struggle against his will by the ceaseless attacks of France, and his claim of the crown was a mere afterthought to secure the alliance of Flanders. The war of Henry, on the other hand, though in form a renewal of the earlier struggle on the expiration of the truce made by Richard the Second, was in fact a wanton aggression on the part of a nation tempted by the helplessness of its opponent and galled by the memory of former defeat. Its one excuse indeed lay in the attacks which France for the past fifteen years had directed against the Lancastrian throne, its encouragement of every enemy without and of every traitor within. In the summer of 1415 the king sailed for the Norman coast, and his first exploit was the capture of Harfleur. Dysentery made havoc in his ranks during the siege, and it was with a mere handful of men that he resolved to insult the enemy by a daring march, like that of Edward, upon Calais. The discord, however, on which he probably reckoned for security, vanished before the actual appearance of the invaders in the

heart of France; and when his weary and half-starved force succeeded in crossing the Somme, it found sixty thousand Frenchmen encamped on the field of Agincourt, right across its line of march. Their position, flanked on either side by woods, but with a front so narrow that the dense masses were drawn up thirty men deep, was strong for purposes of defense but ill suited for attack; and the French leaders, warned by the experience of Crécy and Poitiers, resolved to await the English advance. Henry, on the other hand, had no choice between attack and unconditional surrender. His troops were starving, and the way to Calais lay across the French army. But the king's courage rose with the peril. A knight in his train wished that the thousands of stout warriors lying idle that night in England had been standing in his ranks. Henry answered with a burst of scorn. "I would not have a single man more," he replied. "If God give us the victory, it will be plain that we owe it to His grace. If not, the fewer we are, the less loss for England." Starving and sick as were the handful of men whom he led, they shared the spirit of their leader. As the chill rainy night passed away, his archers bared their arms and breasts to give fair play to "the crooked stick and the gray goose wing," but for which — as the rhyme ran — "England were but a fling," and with a great shout sprang forward to the attack. The sight of their advance roused the fiery pride of the French; the wise resolve of their leaders was forgotten, and the dense mass of men-at-arms plunged heavily forward through miry ground on the English front. But at the first sign of movement Henry had halted his line, and fixing in the ground the sharpened stakes with which each man was furnished, his archers poured their fatal arrow flights into the hostile ranks. The carnage was terrible, but the desperate charges of the French knighthood at last drove the English archers to the neighboring woods, from which they were still able to pour their shot into the enemy's flanks, while Henry, with the men-at-arms around him, flung himself on the French line. In the terrible struggle which followed the king bore off the palm of bravery: he was felled once by a blow from a French mace, and the crown on his helmet was cleft by the sword of the Duke of Alençon; but the enemy was at last broken, and the defeat of the main

body of the French was followed at once by the rout of their reserve. The triumph was more complete, as the odds were even greater, than at Crécy. Eleven thousand Frenchmen lay dead on the field, and more than a hundred princes and great lords were among the fallen.

The immediate result of the battle of Agincourt was small, for the English army was too exhausted for pursuit, and it made its way to Calais only to return to England. The war was limited to a contest for the command of the Channel, till the increasing bitterness of the strife between the Burgundians and Armagnacs encouraged Henry to resume his attempt to recover Normandy. Whatever may have been his aim in this enterprise — whether it were, as has been suggested, to provide a refuge for his house should its power be broken in England, or simply to acquire a command of the seas — the patience and skill with which his object was accomplished raise him high in the rank of military leaders. Disembarking with an army of 40,000 men, near the mouth of the Touque, he stormed Caen, received the surrender of Bayeux, reduced Alençon and Falaise, and detaching his brother the Duke of Gloucester to occupy the Cotentin, made himself master of Avranches and Domfront. With Lower Normandy wholly in his hands, he advanced upon Evreux, captured Louviers, and, seizing Pont-de-l'Arche, threw his troops across the Seine. The end of these masterly movements was now revealed. Rouen was at this time the largest and wealthiest of the towns of France; its walls were defended by a powerful artillery; Alan Blanchard, a brave and resolute patriot, infused the fire of his own temper into the vast population; and the garrison, already strong, was backed by fifteen thousand citizens in arms. But the genius of Henry was more than equal to the difficulties with which he had to deal. He had secured himself from an attack on his rear by the reduction of Lower Normandy, his earlier occupation of Harfleur severed the town from the sea, and his conquest of Pont-de-l'Arche cut it off from relief on the side of Paris. Slowly but steadily the king drew his lines of investment round the doomed city; a flotilla was brought up from Harfleur, a bridge of boats thrown over the Seine above the town, the deep trenches of the besiegers protected by posts, and the des-

perate sallies of the garrison stubbornly beaten back. For six months Rouen held resolutely out, but famine told fast on the vast throng of country folk who had taken refuge within its walls. Twelve thousand of these were at last thrust out of the city gates, but the cold policy of the conqueror refused them passage, and they perished between the trenches and the walls. In the hour of their agony women gave birth to infants, but even the new-born babes which were drawn up in baskets to receive baptism were lowered again to die on their mothers' breasts. It was little better within the town itself. As winter drew on one half of the population wasted away. "War," said the terrible king, "has three handmaidens ever waiting on her, Fire, Blood, and Famine, and I have chosen the meekest maid of the three." But his demand of unconditional surrrender nerved the citizens to a resolve of despair; they determined to fire the city and fling themselves in a mass on the English lines; and Henry, fearful lest his prize should escape him at the last, was driven to offer terms. Those who rejected a foreign yoke were suffered to leave the city, but his vengeance reserved its victim in Alan Blanchard, and the brave patriot was at Henry's orders put to death in cold blood.

A few sieges completed the reduction of Normandy. The king's designs were still limited to the acquisition of that province; and pausing in his career of conquest, he strove to win its loyalty by a remission of taxation and a redress of grievances, and to seal its possession by a formal peace with the French crown. The conferences, however, which were held for this purpose at Pontoise failed through the temporary reconciliation of the French factions, while the length and expense of the war began to rouse remonstrance and discontent at home. The king's difficulties were at their height when the assassination of the Duke of Burgundy at Montereau, in the very presence of the Dauphin with whom he had come to hold conference, rekindled the fires of civil strife. The whole Burgundian party, with the new duke, Philip the Good, at its head, flung itself in a wild thirst for revenge into Henry's hands. The mad king, Charles the Sixth, with his queen and daughters, were in Philip's power; and in his resolve to exclude the Dauphin from the throne the duke stooped to

buy English aid by giving Catherine, the eldest of the French princesses, in marriage to Henry, by conferring on him the regency during the life of Charles, and by recognizing his succession to the crown at that sovereign's death. The treaty was solemnly ratified by Charles himself in a conference at Troyes, and Henry, who in his new capacity of regent had undertaken to conquer in the name of his father-in-law the territory held by the Dauphin, reduced the towns of the Upper Seine and entered Paris in triumph side by side with the king. The States-General of the realm were solemnly convened to the capital; and strange as the provisions of the treaty of Troyes must have seemed, they were confirmed without a murmur, and Henry was formally recognized as the future sovereign of France. A defeat of his brother Clarence in Anjou called him back to the war. His reappearance in the field was marked by the capture of Dreux, and a repulse before Orleans was redeemed by his success in the long and obstinate siege of Meaux. At no time had the fortunes of Henry reached a higher pitch than at the moment when he felt the touch of death. But the rapidity of his disease baffled the skill of physicians, and with a strangely characteristic regret that he had not lived to achieve the conquest of Jerusalem, the great conqueror passed away.

CHAPTER VI

THE NEW MONARCHY, 1422–1540

Section I. — Joan of Arc, 1422–1451

AT the moment when death so suddenly stayed his course the greatness of Henry the Fifth had reached its highest point. He had won the Church by his orthodoxy, the nobles by his warlike prowess, the whole people by his revival of the glories of Crécy and Poitiers. In France his cool policy had transformed him from a foreign conqueror into a legal heir to the crown; his title of Regent and of successor to the throne rested on the formal recognition of the estates of the realm; and his progress to the very moment of his death promised a speedy mastery of the whole country.

But the glory of Agincourt and the genius of Henry the Fifth hardly veiled at the close of his reign the weakness and humiliation of the Crown when the succession passed to his infant son. The long minority of Henry the Sixth, who was a boy of nine months old at his father's death, as well as the personal weakness which marked his after rule, left the house of Lancaster at the mercy of the Parliament. But the Parliament was fast dying down into a mere representation of the baronage and the great landowners. The Commons indeed retained the right of granting and controlling subsidies, of joining in all statutory enactments, and of impeaching ministers. But the Lower House was ceasing to be a real representative of the "Commons" whose name it bore. The borough franchise was suffering from the general tendency to restriction and privilege which in the bulk of towns was soon to reduce it to a mere mockery. Up to this time all freemen settling in a borough and paying their dues to it became by the mere settlement its burgesses; but from the reign of Henry the Sixth this largeness of borough life was roughly curtailed. The trade companies which vindicated

civic freedom from the tyranny of the older merchant gilds themselves tended to become a narrow and exclusive oligarchy. Most of the boroughs had by this time acquired civic property, and it was with the aim of securing their own enjoyment of this against any share of it by "strangers" that the existing burgesses, for the most part, procured charters of incorporation from the Crown, which turned them into a close body and excluded from their number all who were not burgesses by birth or who failed henceforth to purchase their right of entrance by a long apprenticeship. In addition to this narrowing of the burgess body, the internal government of the boroughs had almost universally passed, since the failure of the Communal movement in the thirteenth century, from the free gathering of the citizens in borough-mote into the hands of Common Councils, either self-elected or elected by the wealthier burgesses; and it was to these councils, or to a yet more restricted number of "select men" belonging to them, that clauses in the new charters generally confined the right of choosing their representatives in Parliament. It was with this restriction that the long process of degradation began which ended in reducing the representation of our boroughs to a mere mockery. Great nobles, neighboring landowners, the Crown itself, seized on the boroughs as their prey, and dictated the choice of their representatives. Corruption did whatever force failed to do; and from the Wars of the Roses to the days of Pitt the voice of the people had to be looked for, not in the members for the towns, but in the knights of the counties. The restriction of the county franchise on the other hand was the direct work of the Parliament itself. Economic changes were fast widening the franchise in the counties. The number of freeholders increased with the subdivision of estates and the social changes which we have already examined, while the increase of independence was marked by the "riots and divisions between the gentlemen and other people," which the statesmen of the day attributed to the excessive number of the voters. In many counties the power of the great lords undoubtedly enabled them to control elections through the number of their retainers. In Cade's revolt the Kentish-men complained that "the people of the shire are not allowed to have their free

elections in the choosing of knights for the shire, but letters have been sent from divers estates to the great nobles of the county, the which enforceth their tenants and other people by force to choose other persons than the common will is." It was primarily to check this abuse that a statute of the reign of Henry the Sixth restricted in 1430 the right of voting in shires to freeholders holding land worth forty shillings (a sum equal in our money to at least twenty pounds) a year, and representing a far higher proportional income at the present time. This "great disfranchising statute," as it has been justly termed, was aimed, in its own words, against voters "of no value, whereof every of them pretended to have a voice equivalent with the more worthy knights and esquires dwelling within the same counties." But in actual working the statute was interpreted in a far more destructive fashion than its words were intended to convey. Up to this time all suitors who found themselves at the Sheriff's Court had voted without question for the Knight of the Shire, but by the new statute the great bulk of the existing voters, every leaseholder and every copyholder, found themselves implicitly deprived of their franchise. A later statute, which seems, however, to have had no practical effect, showed the aristocratic temper, as well as the social changes against which it struggled, in its requirement that every Knight of the Shire should be "a gentleman born."

The death of Henry the Fifth revealed in its bare reality the secret of power. The whole of the royal authority vested without a struggle in a council composed of great lords and churchmen representing the baronage, at whose head stood Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, a legitimated son of John of Gaunt by his mistress Catherine Swynford. In the presence of Lollardry and socialism, the Church had at this time ceased to be a great political power and sunk into a mere section of the landed aristocracy. Its one aim was to preserve its enormous wealth, which was threatened at once by the hatred of the heretics and by the greed of the nobles. Lollardry still lived, in spite of the steady persecution, as a spirit of religious and moral revolt; and nine years after the young king's accession we find the Duke of Gloucester traversing England with men-at-arms for the purpose of repress-

ing its risings and hindering the circulation of its invectives against the clergy. The violence and anarchy which had always clung like a taint to the baronage had received a new impulse from the war with France. Long before the struggle was over it had done its fatal work on the mood of the English noble. His aim had become little more than a lust for gold, a longing after plunder, after the pillage of farms, the sack of cities, the ransom of captives. So intense was the greed of gain that only a threat of death could keep the fighting men in their ranks, and the results of victory after victory were lost by the anxiety of the conquerors to deposit their plunder and captives safely at home. The moment the firm hand of great leaders such as Henry the Fifth or Bedford was removed, the war died down into mere massacre and brigandage. "If God had been a captain nowadays," exclaimed a French general, "He would have turned marauder." The nobles were as lawless and dissolute at home as they were greedy and cruel abroad. The Parliaments, which became mere sittings of their retainers and partisans, were like armed camps to which the great lords came with small armies at their backs. That of 1426 received its name of the "Club Parliament" from the fact that when arms were prohibited the retainers of the barons appeared with clubs on their shoulders. When clubs were forbidden, they hid stones and balls of lead in their clothes. The dissoluteness against which Lollardry had raised its great moral protest reigned now without a check. A gleam of intellectual light was breaking on the darkness of the time, but only to reveal its hideous combination of mental energy with moral worthlessness. The Duke of Gloucester, whose love of letters was shown in the noble library he collected, was the most selfish and profligate prince of his day. The Earl of Worcester, a patron of Caxton, and one of the earliest scholars of the Revival of Letters, earned his title of "butcher" by the cruelty which raised him to a preeminence of infamy among the blood-stained leaders of the Wars of the Roses. All spiritual life seemed to have been trodden out in the ruin of the Lollards. Never had English literature fallen so low. A few tedious moralists alone preserved the name of poetry. History died down into the barest and most worthless frag-

ments and annals. Even the religious enthusiasm of the people seemed to have spent itself, or to have been crushed out by the bishops' courts. The one belief of the time was in sorcery and magic. Eleanor Cobham, the wife of the Duke of Gloucester, was convicted of having practised magic against the king's life with a priest, and condemned to do penance in the streets of London. The mist which wrapped the battle-field of Barnet was attributed to the incantations of Friar Bungay. The one pure figure which rises out of the greed, the lust, the selfishness, and unbelief of the time, the figure of Joan of Arc, was regarded by the doctors and priests who judged her as that of a sorceress.

Jeanne d'Arc was the child of a laborer of Domrémy, a little village in the neighborhood of Vaucouleurs on the borders of Lorraine and Champagne. Just without the cottage where she was born began the great woods of the Vosges, where the children of Domrémy drank in poetry and legend from fairy ring and haunted well, hung their flower garlands on the sacred trees, and sang songs to the "good people" who might not drink of the fountain because of their sins. Jeanne loved the forest; its birds and beasts came lovingly to her at her childish call. But at home men saw nothing in her but "a good girl, simple and pleasant in her ways," spinning and sewing by her mother's side while the other girls went to the fields, tender to the poor and sick, fond of church, and listening to the church bell with a dreamy passion of delight which never left her. The quiet life was soon broken by the storm of war as it at last came home to Domrémy. The death of King Charles, which followed hard on that of Henry the Fifth, brought little change. The Dauphin at once proclaimed himself Charles the Seventh of France; but Henry the Sixth was owned as sovereign over the whole of the territory which Charles had actually ruled, and the incursions which the partisans of Charles, now reenforced by Lombard soldiers from the Milanese and by four thousand Scots under the Earl of Douglas, made with fresh vigor across the Loire were easily repulsed by Duke John of Bedford, the late king's brother, who had been named in his will Regent of France. In genius for war as in political capacity John was hardly inferior to Henry

himself. Drawing closer by marriage and patient diplomacy his alliances with the dukes of Burgundy and Brittany, he completed the conquest of Northern France, secured his communications with Normandy by the capture of Meulan, made himself master of the line of the Yonne by a victory near Auxerre, and pushed forward into the country near Mâcon. It was to arrest his progress that the Constable of Buchan advanced boldly from the Loire to the very borders of Normandy and attacked the English army at Verneuil. But a repulse hardly less disastrous than that of Agincourt left a third of the French knighthood on the field; and the regent was preparing to cross the Loire when he was hindered by the intrigues of his brother the Duke of Gloucester. The nomination of Gloucester to the regency in England by the will of the late king had been set aside by the council, and sick of the powerless Protectorate with which they had invested him, the duke sought a new opening for his restless ambition in the Netherlands, where he supported the claims of Jacqueline, the Countess in her own right of Holland and Hainault, whom he had married on her divorce from the Duke of Brabant. His enterprise roused the jealousy of the Duke of Burgundy, who regarded himself as heir to the Duke of Brabant, and the efforts of Bedford were paralyzed by the withdrawal of his Burgundian allies as they marched northward to combat his brother. Though Gloucester soon returned to England, the ruinous struggle went on for three years, during which Bedford was forced to remain simply on the defensive, till the cessation of war again restored to him the aid of Burgundy. Strife at home between Gloucester and Beaufort had been even more fatal in diverting the supplies of men and money needed for the war in France, but with temporary quiet in England and peace in Holland Bedford was once more able to push forward to the conquest of the south. The delay, however, brought little help to France, and Charles saw Orleans invested by ten thousand of the allies without power to march to its relief. The war had long since reached the borders of Lorraine. The north of France, indeed, was being fast reduced to a desert. The husbandmen fled for refuge to the towns, till these in fear of famine shut their gates against them. Then in their despair they

threw themselves into the woods and became brigands in their turn. So terrible was the devastation, that two hostile bodies of troops at one time failed even to find one another in the desolate Beauce. The towns were in hardly better case, for misery and disease killed a hundred thousand people in Paris alone. As the outcasts and wounded passed by Domrémy the young peasant girl gave them her bed and nursed them in their sickness. Her whole nature summed itself up in one absorbing passion: she "had pity," to use the phrase forever on her lip, "on the fair realm of France." As her passion grew she recalled old prophecies that a maid from the Lorraine border should save the land; she saw visions; St. Michael appeared to her in a flood of blinding light, and bade her go to the help of the king and restore to him his realm. "Messire," answered the girl, "I am but a poor maiden; I know not how to ride to the wars, or to lead men-at-arms." The archangel returned to give her courage, and to tell her of "the pity" that there was in heaven for the fair realm of France. The girl wept, and longed that the angels who appeared to her would carry her away, but her mission was clear. It was in vain that her father when he heard her purpose swore to drown her ere she should go to the field with men-at-arms. It was in vain that the priest, the wise people of the village, the captain of Vaucouleurs, doubted and refused to aid her. "I must go to the king," persisted the peasant girl, "even if I wear my limbs to the very knees." "I had far rather rest and spin by my mother's side," she pleaded with a touching pathos, "for this is no work of my choosing, but I must go and do it, for my Lord wills it." "And who," they asked, "is your Lord?" "He is God." Words such as these touched the rough captain at last: he took Jeanne by the hand and swore to lead her to the king. When she reached Chinon she found hesitation and doubt. The theologians proved from their books that they ought not to believe her. "There is more in God's book than in yours," Jeanne answered simply. At last Charles received her in the midst of a throng of nobles and soldiers. "Gentle Dauphin," said the girl, "my name is Jeanne the Maid. The Heavenly King sends me to tell you that you shall be anointed and crowned in the town of Rheims, and you

shall be lieutenant of the Heavenly King who is the King of France."

Orleans had already been driven by famine to offers of surrender when Jeanne appeared in the French court. Charles had done nothing for its aid but shut himself up at Chinon and weep helplessly. The long series of English victories had in fact so demoralized the French soldiery that a mere detachment of archers under Sir John Fastolf had repulsed an army, in what was called the "battle of the Herrings," and conducted the convoy of provisions to which it owed its name in triumph into the camp before Orleans. Only three thousand Englishmen remained there in the trenches after a new withdrawal of their Burgundian allies, but though the town swarmed with men-at-arms not a single sally had been ventured upon during the six months' siege. The success however of the handful of English besiegers depended wholly on the spell of terror which they had cast over France, and the appearance of Jeanne at once broke the spell. The girl was in her eighteenth year, tall, finely formed, with all the vigor and activity of her peasant rearing, able to stay from dawn to nightfall on horseback without meat or drink. As she mounted her charger, clad in white armor from head to foot, with the great white banner studded with fleur-de-lys waving over her head, she seemed "a thing wholly divine, whether to see or hear." The ten thousand men-at-arms who followed her from Blois, rough plunderers whose only prayer was that of La Hire, "Sire Dieu, I pray you to do for La Hire what La Hire would do for you, were you captain at arms and he God," left off their oaths and foul living at her word and gathered round the altars on their march. Her shrewd peasant humor helped her to manage the wild soldiery, and her followers laughed over their camp-fires at the old warrior who had been so puzzled by her prohibition of oaths that she suffered him still to swear by his baton. In the midst of her enthusiasm her good sense never left her. The people crowded round her as she rode along, praying her to work miracles, and bringing crosses and chaplets to be blessed by her touch. "Touch them yourself," she said to an old Dame Margaret; "your touch will be just as good as mine." But her faith in her mission remained as firm as ever. "The Maid prays and re-

quires you," she wrote to Bedford, "to work no more distraction in France, but to come in her company to rescue the Holy Sepulcher from the Turk." "I bring you," she told Dunois when he sallied out of Orleans to meet her, "the best aid ever sent to any one, the aid of the King of Heaven." The besiegers looked on overawed as she entered Orleans and, riding round the walls, bade the people look fearlessly on the dreaded forts which surrounded them. Her enthusiasm drove the hesitating generals to engage the handful of besiegers, and the enormous disproportion of forces at once made itself felt. Fort after fort was taken, till only the strongest remained, and then the council of war resolved to adjourn the attack. "You have taken your counsel," replied Jeanne, "and I take mine." Placing herself at the head of the men-at-arms, she ordered the gates to be thrown open, and led them against the fort. Few as they were, the English fought desperately, and the Maid, who had fallen wounded while endeavoring to scale its walls, was borne into a vineyard, while Dunois sounded the retreat. "Wait a while!" the girl imperiously pleaded; "eat and drink! So soon as my standard touches the wall you shall enter the fort." It touched, and the assailants burst in. On the next day the siege was abandoned, and the force which had conducted it withdrew in good order to the north. In the midst of her triumph Jeanne still remained the pure, tender-hearted peasant girl of the Vosges. Her first visit as she entered Orleans was to the great church, and there, as she knelt at mass, she wept in such a passion of devotion that "all the people wept with her." Her tears burst forth afresh at her first sight of bloodshed and of the corpses strewn over the battle-field. She grew frightened at her first wound, and only threw off the touch of womanly fear when she heard the signal for retreat. Yet more womanly was the purity with which she passed through the brutal warriors of a medieval camp. It was her care for her honor that had led her to clothe herself in a soldier's dress. She wept hot tears when told of the foul taunts of the English, and called passionately on God to witness her chastity. "Yield thee, yield thee, Glasdale," she cried to the English warrior whose insults had been foulest, as he fell wounded at her feet, "you called me

harlot! I have great pity on your soul." But all thought of herself was lost in the thought of her mission. It was in vain that the French generals strove to remain on the Loire. Jeanne was resolute to complete her task, and while the English remained panic-stricken around Paris the army followed her from Gien through Troyes, growing in number as it advanced, till it reached the gates of Rheims. With the coronation of Charles, the Maid felt her errand to be over. "O gentle King, the pleasure of God is done," she cried, as she flung herself at the feet of Charles the Seventh and asked leave to go home. "Would it were His pleasure," she pleaded with the archbishop as he forced her to remain, "that I might go and keep sheep once more with my sisters and my brothers: they would be so glad to see me again!"

The policy of the French court detained her while the cities of the north of France opened their gates to the newly consecrated king. Bedford, however, who had been left without money or men, had now received reenforcements, and Charles, after a repulse before the walls of Paris, fell back behind the Loire; while the towns on the Oise submitted again to the Duke of Burgundy. In this later struggle Jeanne fought with her usual bravery, but with the fatal consciousness that her mission was at an end, and during the defense of Compiègne she fell into the power of the Bastard of Vendôme, to be sold by her captor into the hands of the Duke of Burgundy and by the duke into the hands of the English. To the English her triumphs were victories of sorcery, and after a year's imprisonment she was brought to trial on a charge of heresy before an ecclesiastical court with the Bishop of Beauvais at its head. Throughout the long process which followed every art was employed to entangle her in her talk. But the simple shrewdness of the peasant girl foiled the efforts of her judges. "Do you believe," they asked, "that you are in a state of grace?" "If I am not," she replied, "God will put me in it. If I am, God will keep me in it." Her capture, they argued, showed that God had forsaken her. "Since it has pleased God that I should be taken," she answered meekly, "it is for the best." "Will you submit," they demanded at last, "to the judgment of the Church Militant?" "I have come to the king of France,"

Jeanne replied, "by commission from God and from the Church Triumphant above: to that Church I submit." "I had far rather die," she ended passionately, "than renounce what I have done by my Lord's command." They deprived her of mass. "Our Lord can make me hear it without your aid," she said, weeping. "Do your voices," asked the judges, "forbid you to submit to the Church and the pope?" "Ah, no! Our Lord first served." Sick, and deprived of all religious aid, it was no wonder that as the long trial dragged on and question followed question Jeanne's firmness wavered. On the charge of sorcery and diabolical possession she still appealed firmly to God. "I hold to my Judge," she said, as her earthly judges gave sentence against her, "to the King of heaven and earth. God has always been my Lord in all that I have done. The devil has never had power over me." It was only with a view to be delivered from the military prison and transferred to the prisons of the Church that she consented to a formal abjuration of heresy. She feared in fact among the English soldiery those outrages to her honor, to guard against which she had from the first assumed the dress of a man. In the eyes of the Church her dress was a crime and she abandoned it; but a renewed insult forced her to resume the one safeguard left her, and the return to it was treated as a relapse into heresy which doomed her to death. A great pile was raised in the market-place of Rouen, where her statue stands now. Even the brutal soldiers who snatched the hated "witch" from the hands of the clergy and hurried her to her doom were hushed as she reached the stake. One indeed passed to her a rough cross he had made from a stick he held, and she clasped it to her bosom. "Oh! Rouen, Rouen," she was heard to murmur, as her eyes ranged over the city from the lofty scaffold, "I have great fear lest you suffer for my death." "Yes! my voices were of God!" she suddenly cried as the last moment came; "they have never deceived me!" Soon the flames reached her, the girl's head sank on her breast, there was one cry of "Jesus!"— "We are lost," an English soldier muttered as the crowd broke up, "we have burned a Saint."

The English cause was indeed irretrievably lost. In spite of a pompous coronation of the boy king Henry at Paris, Bed-

ford, with the cool wisdom of his temper, seems to have abandoned all hope of permanently retaining France, and to have fallen back on his brother's original plan of securing Normandy. Henry's court was established for a year at Rouen, a university founded at Caen, and whatever rapine and disorder might be permitted elsewhere, justice, good government, and security for trade were steadily maintained through the favored provinces. At home Bedford was resolutely backed by the Bishop of Winchester, who had been raised in 1426 to the rank of cardinal, and who now again governed England through the royal council in spite of the fruitless struggles of the Duke of Gloucester. Even when he had been excluded from the council by Gloucester's intrigues, Beaufort's immense wealth was poured without stint into the exhausted treasury till his loans to the Crown amounted to half a million; and he had unscrupulously diverted an army which he had raised at his own cost for the Hussite Crusade in Bohemia to the relief of Bedford after the deliverance of Orleans. The cardinal's diplomatic ability was seen in the truces he wrung from Scotland, and in his personal efforts to prevent the reconciliation of Burgundy with France. In 1435, however, the Duke of Burgundy concluded a formal treaty with Charles; and his desertion was followed by a yet more fatal blow to the English cause in the death of Bedford. Paris rose suddenly against its English garrison and declared for King Charles. Henry's dominion shrank at once to Normandy and the outlying fortresses of Picardy and Maine. But reduced as they were to a mere handful, and fronted by a whole nation in arms, the English soldiers struggled on with as desperate a bravery as in their days of triumph. Lord Talbot, the most daring of their chiefs, forded the Somme with the waters up to his chin to relieve Crotoy, and threw his men across the Oise in the face of a French army to relieve Pontoise. The Duke of York, who succeeded Bedford as regent, by his abilities stemmed for a time the tide of ill fortune, but the jealousy shown to him by the king's counselors told fatally on the course of the war. A fresh effort for peace was made by the Earl of Suffolk, who swayed the council after age forced Beaufort to retire to Winchester, and who negotiated for his master a marriage with Margaret,

the daughter of Duke René of Anjou. Not only Anjou, of which England possessed nothing, but Maine, the bulwark of Normandy, were ceded to Duke René as the price of a match which Suffolk regarded as the prelude to peace. But the terms of the treaty and the delays which still averted a final peace gave new strength to the war party with Gloucester at its head. The danger was roughly met. Gloucester was arrested as he rode to Parliament on a charge of secret conspiracy; and a few days later he was found dead in his lodging. But the difficulties he had raised foiled Suffolk in his negotiations; and though Charles extorted the surrender of Le Mans by a threat of war, the provisions of the treaty remained for the most part unfulfilled. The struggle, however, now became a hopeless one. In two months from the resumption of the war half Normandy was in the hands of Dunois; Rouen rose against her feeble garrison and threw open her gates to Charles; and the defeat of an English force at Fourmigny was the signal for revolt throughout the rest of the province. The surrender of Cherbourg in 1450 left Henry not a foot of Norman ground, and the next year the last fragment of the duchy of Guienne was lost. Gascony indeed once more turned to the English Crown on the landing of an English force under Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury. But ere the twenty thousand men whose levy was voted by Parliament for his aid could cross the Channel Shrewsbury suddenly found himself face to face with the whole French army. His men were mown down by its guns, and the earl himself left dead on the field. The surrender of fortress after fortress secured the final expulsion of the English from the soil of France. The Hundred Years' war had ended, not only in the loss of the temporary conquests made since the time of Edward the Third, with the exception of Calais, but in the loss of the great southern province which had remained in English hands ever since the marriage of its duchess, Eleanor, to Henry the Second, and in the building up of France into a far greater power than it had ever been before.

Section II. — The Wars of the Roses, 1450–1471

The ruinous issue of the great struggle with France roused England to a burst of fury against the wretched government to whose weakness and credulity it attributed its disasters. Suffolk was impeached, and murdered as he crossed the sea into exile. When the Bishop of Chichester was sent to pay the sailors at Portsmouth, and strove to put them off with less than their due, they fell on him and slew him. In Kent, the great manufacturing district of the day, seething with a busy population, and especially concerned with the French contests through the piracy of the Cinque Ports, where every house showed some spoil from the wars, the discontent broke into open revolt. The rising spread from Kent over Surrey and Sussex. A military levy of the yeomen of the three shires was organized; the insurgents were joined by more than a hundred esquires and gentlemen, and two great land-owners of Sussex, the Abbot of Battle and the Prior of Lewes, openly favored their cause. John Cade, a soldier of some experience in the French wars, took the significant name of Mortimer, and placed himself at their head; and the army, now twenty thousand men strong, marched on Blackheath. The "Complaint of the Commons of Kent," which they laid before the royal council, is of high value in the light which it throws on the condition of the people. Not one of the demands touches on religious reform. The question of villeinage and serfage finds no place in the "Complaint" of 1450. In the seventy years which had intervened since the last peasant rising, villeinage had died naturally away before the progress of social change. The Statutes of Apparel, which from this time encumber the Statute-book, show in their anxiety to curtail the dress of the laborer and the farmer the progress of these classes in comfort and wealth; and from the language of the statutes themselves, it is plain that as wages rose both farmer and laborer went on clothing themselves better in spite of sumptuary provisions. With the exception of a demand for the repeal of the Statute of Laborers, the program of the Commons was now not social, but political. The "Complaint" calls for administrative and economical reforms, for

a change of ministry, a more careful expenditure of the royal revenue, and for the restoration of freedom of election, which had been broken in upon by the interference both of the Crown and the great landowners. The refusal of the council to receive the "Complaint" was followed by a victory of the Kentish-men over the royal forces at Sevenoaks; the entry of the insurgents into London, coupled with the execution of Lord Say, the most unpopular of the royal ministers, broke the obstinacy of his colleagues. The "Complaint" was received, pardons were granted to all who had joined in the rising, and the insurgents dispersed to their homes. Cade, who had striven in vain to retain them in arms, sought to form a new force by throwing open the jails; but his men quarreled, and Cade himself was slain by the sheriff of Kent as he fled into Sussex. The "Complaint" was quietly laid aside. No attempt was made to redress the grievances which it stated, and the main object of popular hate, the Duke of Somerset, took his place at the head of the royal council.

Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, as the grandson of John of Gaunt and his mistress Catherine Swynford, was the representative of a junior branch of the House of Lancaster, whose claims to the throne Henry IV. had barred by a clause in the act which legitimated their line, but whose hopes of the Crown were roused by the childlessness of Henry VI. He found a rival in the Duke of York, heir of the houses of York, of Clarence, and of Mortimer, who boasted of a double descent from Edward III. In addition to other claims which York as yet refrained from urging, he claimed as descendant of Edmund of Langley, Edward's fifth son, to be regarded as heir presumptive to the throne. Popular favor seems to have been on his side, but in 1453 the birth of the king's son promised to free the Crown from the turmoil of warring factions; Henry, however, at the same time sank into a state of idiocy which made his rule impossible, and York was appointed protector of the realm. But on Henry's recovery the Duke of Somerset, who had been impeached and committed to the Tower by his rival, was restored to power, and supported with singular vigor and audacity by the queen. York at once took up arms, and

backed by the earls of Salisbury and Warwick, the heads of the great House of Neville, he advanced with 3000 men upon St. Albans, where Henry was encamped. A successful assault upon the town was crowned by the death of Somerset; and a return of the king's malady brought the renewal of York's Protectorate. Henry's recovery, however, again restored the supremacy of the House of Beaufort, and after a temporary reconciliation between the two parties there was a fresh outbreak of war. Salisbury defeated Lord Audley at Bloreheath, and York with the two earls raised his standard at Ludlow. The king marched rapidly on the insurgents, and a decisive battle was only averted by the desertion of a part of the Yorkist army and the disbanding of the rest. The duke himself fled to Ireland, the earls to Calais, while the queen, summoning a Parliament at Coventry, pressed on their attainder. But the check, whatever its cause, had been merely a temporary one. In the following midsummer the earls again landed in Kent, and, backed by a general rising of the county, entered London amidst the acclamations of its citizens. The royal army was defeated in a hard-fought action at Northampton, Margaret fled to Scotland, and Henry was left a prisoner in the hands of the Duke of York.

The position of York as heir presumptive to the Crown by descent from Edmund of Langley had ceased with the birth of a son to Henry; but the victory of Northampton no sooner raised him to the supreme control of affairs than he ventured to assert the far more dangerous claims which he had secretly cherished, and to their consciousness of which was owing the bitter hostility of Henry and his queen. As the descendant of Edmund of Langley he stood only next in succession to the House of Lancaster, but as the descendant of Lionel, the elder brother of John of Gaunt, he stood in strict hereditary right before it. We have already seen how the claims of Lionel had passed to the House of Mortimer: it was through Anne, the heiress of the Mortimers, who had wedded his father, that they passed to the duke. There was, however, no constitutional ground for any limitation of the right of Parliament to set aside an elder branch in favor of a younger, and in the parliamentary act which placed the House of Lan-

caster on the throne the claim of the House of Mortimer had been deliberately set aside. Possession, too, told against the Yorkist pretensions. To modern minds the best reply to their claim lay in the words used at a later time by Henry himself. "My father was king; his father also was king; I myself have worn the crown forty years, from my cradle; you have all sworn fealty to me as your sovereign, and your fathers have done the like to mine. How then can my right be disputed?" Long and undisturbed possession, as well as a distinctly legal title by free vote of Parliament, was in favor of the House of Lancaster. But the persecution of the Lollards, the interference with elections, the odium of the war, the shame of the long misgovernment, told fatally against the weak and imbecile king, whose reign had been a long battle of contending factions. That the misrule had been serious was shown by the attitude of the commercial class. It was the rising of Kent, the great manufacturing district of the realm, which brought about the victory of Northampton. Throughout the struggle which followed, London and the great merchant towns were steady for the House of York. Zeal for the Lancastrian cause was found only in Wales, in Northern England, and in the southwestern shires. It is absurd to suppose that the shrewd traders of Cheapside were moved by an abstract question of hereditary right, or that the wild Welshmen believed themselves to be supporting the right of Parliament to regulate the succession. But it marks the power which Parliament had now gained that the Duke of York felt himself compelled to convene the two Houses, and to lay his claim before the Lords as a petition of right. Neither oaths nor the numerous acts which had settled and confirmed the right to the Crown in the House of Lancaster could destroy, he pleaded, his hereditary claim. The baronage received the petition with hardly concealed reluctance, and solved the question, as they hoped, by a compromise. They refused to dethrone the king, but they had sworn no fealty to his child, and at Henry's death they agreed to receive the duke as successor to the Crown. But the open display of York's pretensions at once united the partisans of the royal house, and the deadly struggle which received the name of the Wars of the Roses, from the white rose which

formed the badge of the House of York and the red rose which was the cognizance of the House of Lancaster, began in the gathering of the north round Lord Clifford, and of the west round the new Duke of Somerset. York, who had hurried to meet the first with a far inferior force, was defeated and slain at Wakefield, and the passion of civil war broke fiercely out on the field. The Earl of Salisbury was hurried to the block, and the head of Duke Richard, crowned in mockery with a diadem of paper, is said to have been impaled on the walls of York. His second son, Lord Rutland, fell crying for mercy on his knees before Clifford. But Clifford's father had been the first to fall in the battle of St. Albans which opened the struggle. "As your father killed mine," cried the savage baron while he plunged his dagger in the young noble's breast, "I will kill you!" The brutal deed was soon to be avenged. Duke Richard's eldest son, Edward, Earl of March, hurried from the west, and, routing a body of Lancastrians at Mortimer's Cross, struck boldly upon London. A force of Kentish-men under the Earl of Warwick barred the march of the Lancastrian army on the capital, but after a desperate struggle at St. Albans the Yorkist forces broke under cover of night. An immediate advance of the conquerors might have decided the contest, but Queen Margaret paused to sully her victory by a series of bloody executions, and the rough northerners who formed the bulk of her army scattered to pillage, while Edward appeared before London. The citizens rallied at his call, and cries of "Long live King Edward" rang round the handsome young leader as he rode through the streets. A council of Yorkist lords, hastily summoned, resolved that the compromise agreed on in Parliament was at an end and that Henry of Lancaster had forfeited the throne. The final issue, however, now lay, not with Parliament, but with the sword. Disappointed of London, the Lancastrian army fell rapidly back on the north, and Edward hurried as rapidly in pursuit.

The two armies encountered one another at Towton Field, near Tadcaster. In the numbers engaged, as well as in the terrible obstinacy of the struggle, no such battle had been seen in England since the fight of Senlac. The armies numbered together nearly 120,000 men. The day had just broken

when the Yorkists advanced through a thick snowfall, and for six hours the battle raged with desperate bravery on either side. At one critical moment Warwick saw his men falter, and stabbing his horse before them, swore on the cross of his sword to win or die on the field. The battle was turned by the arrival of Norfolk with a fresh force. At last the Lancastrians gave way, a river in their rear turned the retreat into a rout, and the flight and carnage, for no quarter was given on either side, went on through the night and the morrow. Edward's herald counted more than 20,000 Lancastrian corpses on the field, and the losses of the conquerors were hardly less heavy. But their triumph was complete. The Earl of Northumberland was slain; the earls of Devonshire and Wiltshire were taken and beheaded; the Duke of Somerset fled into exile. Henry himself with his queen was forced to fly over the border and to find a refuge in Scotland. The cause of the House of Lancaster was lost, and with the victory of Towton the Crown of England passed to Edward of York. A vast bill of attainder wrapped in the same ruin and confiscation the nobles and gentry who still adhered to the House of Lancaster. The struggles of Margaret only served to bring fresh calamities on her adherents. A new rising in the north was crushed by the Earl of Warwick, and a legend which lights up the gloom of the time with a gleam of poetry told how the fugitive queen, after escaping with difficulty from a troop of bandits, found a new brigand in the depths of the wood. With the daring of despair she confided to him her child. "I trust to your loyalty," she said, "the son of your king." Margaret and her child escaped over the border under the robber's guidance; but on the defeat of a new revolt in the battle of Hexham, Henry, after helpless wanderings, was betrayed into the hands of his enemies. His feet were tied to the stirrups, he was led thrice round the pillory, and then conducted as a prisoner to the Tower.

Ruined as feudalism really was by the decline of the baronage, the extinction of the greater houses, and the break-up of the great estates, which had been steadily going on, it had never seemed more powerful than in the years which followed Towton. Out of the wreck of the baronage a family which had always stood high amongst its fellows towered

into unrivaled greatness. Lord Warwick was by descent Earl of Salisbury, a son of the great noble whose support had been mainly instrumental in raising the House of York to the throne. He had doubled his wealth and influence by his acquisition of the earldom of Warwick through a marriage with the heiress of the Beauchamps. His services to the Yorkists were munificently rewarded by the grant of vast estates from the confiscated lands of Lancastrians, and by his elevation to the highest posts in the service of the State. He was captain of Calais, admiral of the fleet in the Channel, and warden of the Western Marches. This personal power was backed by the power of the House of Neville, of which he was the head. The command of the northern border lay in the hands of his brother, Lord Montagu, who received as his share of the spoil the forfeited earldom of Northumberland and the estates of his hereditary rivals, the Percies. A younger brother, George Neville, was raised to the see of York and the post of lord chancellor. Lesser rewards fell to his uncles, Lords Falconberg, Abergavenny, and Latimer. The vast power which such an accumulation of wealth and honors placed at the earl's disposal was wielded with consummate ability. In outer seeming Warwick was the very type of the feudal baron. He could raise armies at his call from his own earldoms. Six hundred liveried retainers followed him to Parliament. Thousands of dependents feasted in his courtyard. But few men were really further from the feudal ideal. Active and ruthless warrior as he was, his enemies denied to the earl the gift of personal daring. In war he was rather general than soldier. His genius, in fact, was not so much military as diplomatic; what he excelled in was intrigue, treachery, the contrivance of plots, and sudden desertions. And in the boy king whom he had raised to the throne he met not merely a consummate general, but a politician whose subtlety and rapidity of conception was destined to leave a deep and enduring mark on the character of the monarchy itself. Edward was but nineteen at his accession, and both his kinship (for he was the king's cousin by blood) and his recent services rendered Warwick during the first three years of his reign all-powerful in the State. But the final ruin of Henry's cause in the battle of Hexham gave

the signal for a silent struggle between the earl and his young sovereign. Edward's first step was to avow his union with the widow of a slain Lancastrian, Dame Elizabeth Grey, at the very moment when Warwick was negotiating for him a French marriage. Her family, the Woodvilles, were raised to greatness as a counterpoise to the Nevilles; her father, Lord Rivers, became treasurer and constable; her son by the first marriage was betrothed to the heiress of the Duke of Exeter, whom Warwick sought for his nephew. Warwick's policy lay in a close connection with France; foiled in his first project, he now pressed for a marriage of the king's sister, Margaret, with a French prince, but in 1467, while he crossed the sea to treat with Lewis, Edward availed himself of his absence to deprive his brother of the seals, and prepared to wed Margaret to the sworn enemy both of France and of Warwick, Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. Warwick replied to Edward's challenge by a plot to rally the discontented Yorkists round the king's brother, the Duke of Clarence. Secret negotiations ended in the marriage of his daughter to Clarence; and a revolt which instantly broke out threw Edward into the hands of his great subject. But the bold scheme broke down. The Yorkist nobles demanded the king's liberation. Warwick could look for support only to the Lancastrians, but the Lancastrians demanded Henry's restoration as the price of their aid. Such a demand was fatal to the plan for placing Clarence on the throne, and Warwick was thrown back on a formal reconciliation with the king. A new rising broke out in the following spring in Lincolnshire. The king, however, was now ready for the strife. A rapid march to the north ended in the rout of the insurgents, and Edward turned on the instigators of the revolt. But Clarence and the earl could gather no force to meet him. Yorkist and Lancastrian alike held aloof, and they were driven to flight. Calais, though held by Warwick's deputy, repulsed them from its walls, and the earl's fleet was forced to take refuge in France, where the Burgundian connection of Edward secured his enemies the support of Louis the Eleventh. But the unscrupulous temper of the earl was seen in the alliance which he at once concluded with the partisans of the House of Lancaster. On the promise of Queen Margaret to

wed her son to his daughter Anne, Warwick engaged to restore the Crown to the royal captive, whom he had flung into the Tower; and choosing a moment when Edward was busy with a revolt in the north, and when a storm had dispersed the Burgundian fleet which defended the Channel, he threw himself boldly on the English shore. His army grew as he pushed northward, and the desertion of Lord Montagu, whom Edward still trusted, drove the king in turn to seek shelter over sea. While Edward fled with a handful of adherents to beg help from Charles the Bold, Henry of Lancaster was again conducted from his prison to the throne; but the bitter hate of the party Warwick had so ruthlessly crushed found no gratitude for the "Kingmaker." His own conduct, as well as that of his party, when Edward again disembarked in the spring at Ravenspur, showed a weariness of the new alliance, quickened, perhaps, by their dread of Margaret, whose return to England was hourly expected. Passing through the Lancastrian districts of the north with a declaration that he waived all right to the Crown and sought only his own hereditary dukedom, Edward was left unassailed by a force which Montagu had collected, and was joined on his march by his brother Clarence, who had throughout acted in concert with Warwick. Encamped at Coventry, the earl himself contemplated a similar treason, but the coming of two Lancastrian leaders put an end to the negotiations. When Montagu joined his brother, Edward marched on London, followed by Warwick's army; its gates were opened by the perfidy of the earl's brother, Archbishop Neville; and Henry of Lancaster passed anew to the Tower. The battle of Barnet, a medley of carnage and treachery which lasted three hours, ended with the fall of Warwick, who was charged with cowardly flight. Margaret had landed too late to bring aid to her great partisan, but the military triumph of Edward was completed by the skilful strategy with which he forced her army to battle at Tewkesbury, and by its complete overthrow. The queen herself became a captive; her boy fell on the field, stabbed — as was affirmed — by the Yorkist lords after Edward had met his cry for mercy by a buffet from his gauntlet; and the death of Henry in the Tower crushed the last hopes of the House of Lancaster.

Section III. — The New Monarchy, 1471–1509

There are few periods in our annals from which we turn with such weariness and disgust as from the Wars of the Roses. Their savage battles, their ruthless executions, their shameless treasons, seem all the more terrible from the pure selfishness of the ends for which men fought, the utter want of all nobleness and chivalry in the struggle itself, of all great result in its close. But even while the contest was raging the cool eye of a philosophic statesman could find in it matter for other feelings than those of mere disgust. England presented to Philippe de Commines the rare spectacle of a land where, brutal as was the civil strife, "there are no buildings destroyed or demolished by war, and where the mischief of it falls on those who make the war." The ruin and bloodshed were limited, in fact, to the great lords and their feudal retainers. Once or twice indeed, as at Towton, the towns threw themselves into the struggle, but for the most part the trading and agricultural classes stood wholly apart from it. Slowly but surely the foreign commerce of the country, hitherto conducted by the Italian, the Hanse merchant, or the trader of Catalonia or Southern Gaul, was passing into English hands. English merchants were settled at Florence and at Venice. English merchant ships appeared in the Baltic. The first faint upgrowth of manufactures was seen in a crowd of protective statutes which formed a marked feature in the legislation of Edward the Fourth. The general tranquillity of the country at large, while the baronage was dashing itself to pieces in battle after battle, was shown by the remarkable fact that justice remained wholly undisturbed. The law courts sat at Westminster. The judges rode on circuit as of old. The system of jury trial took more and more its modern form by the separation of the jurors from the witnesses. But if the common view of England during these wars as a mere chaos of treason and bloodshed is a false one, still more false is the common view of the pettiness of their result. The Wars of the Roses did far more than ruin one royal house or set up another on the throne. If they did not utterly destroy English freedom, they arrested its progress for more than a

hundred years. They found England, in the words of Commines, "among all the world's lordships of which I have knowledge, that where the public weal is best ordered, and where least violence reigns over the people." A king of England — the shrewd observer noticed — "can undertake no enterprise of account without assembling his Parliament, which is a thing most wise and holy, and therefore are these kings stronger and better served" than the despotic sovereigns of the Continent. The English kingship — as a judge, Sir John Fortescue, could boast when writing at this time — was not an absolute but a limited monarchy; the land was not a land where the will of the prince was itself the law, but where the prince could neither make laws nor impose taxes save by his subjects' consent. At no time had Parliament played so constant and prominent a part in the government of the realm. At no time had the principles of constitutional liberty seemed so thoroughly understood and so dear to the people at large. The long parliamentary contest between the Crown and the two Houses since the days of Edward the First had firmly established the great securities of national liberty — the right of freedom from arbitrary taxation, from arbitrary legislation, from arbitrary imprisonment, and the responsibility of even the highest servants of the Crown to Parliament and to the law. But with the close of the struggle for the succession this liberty suddenly disappears. We enter on an epoch of constitutional retrogression in which the slow work of the age that went before it was rapidly undone. Parliamentary life was almost suspended, or was turned into a mere form by the overpowering influence of the Crown. The legislative powers of the two Houses were usurped by the royal council. Arbitrary taxation reappeared in benevolences and forced loans. Personal liberty was almost extinguished by a formidable spy system and by the constant practise of arbitrary imprisonment. Justice was degraded by the prodigal use of bills of attainder, by the wide extension of the judicial power of the royal council, by the servility of judges, by the coercion of juries. So vast and sweeping was the change that to careless observers of a later day the constitutional monarchy of the Edwards and the Henrys seemed suddenly to have transformed itself

under the Tudors into a despotism as complete as the despotism of the Turk. Such a view is no doubt exaggerated and unjust. Bend and strain the law as he might, there never was a time when the most wilful of English rulers failed to own the restraints of law; and the obedience of the most servile among English subjects lay within bounds, at once political and religious, which no theory of king-worship could bring them to overpass. But even if we make these reserves, the character of the monarchy from the time of Edward the Fourth to the time of Elizabeth remains something strange and isolated in our history. It is hard to connect the kingship of the old English, of the Norman, the Angevin, or the Plantagenet kings, with the kingship of the House of York or of the House of Tudor.

If we seek a reason for so sudden and complete a revolution, we find it in the disappearance of that organization of society in which our constitutional liberty had till now found its security. Freedom had been won by the sword of the baronage. Its tradition had been watched over by the jealousy of the Church. The new class of the Commons which had grown from the union of the country squire and the town trader was widening its sphere of political activity as it grew. But at the close of the Wars of the Roses these older checks no longer served as restraints upon the action of the Crown. The baronage had fallen more and more into decay. The Church lingered helpless and perplexed, till it was struck down by Thomas Cromwell. The traders and the smaller proprietors sank into political inactivity. On the other hand, the Crown, which only fifty years before had been the sport of every faction, towered into solitary greatness. The old English kingship, limited by the forces of feudalism or of the religious sanctions wielded by the priesthood, or by the progress of constitutional freedom, faded suddenly away, and in its place we see, all-absorbing and unrestrained, the despotism of the new Monarchy. Revolutionary as the change was, however, we have already seen in their gradual growth the causes which brought it about. The social organization from which our political constitution had hitherto sprung and on which it still rested had been silently sapped by the progress of industry, by the growth of spiritual and

intellectual enlightenment, and by changes in the art of war. Its ruin was precipitated by the new attitude of men towards the Church, by the disfranchisement of the Commons, and by the decline of the baronage. Of the great houses some were extinct, others lingered only in obscure branches which were mere shadows of their former greatness. With the exception of the Poles, the Stanleys, and the Howards, themselves families of recent origin, hardly a fragment of the older baronage interfered from this time in the work of government. Neither the Church nor the smaller proprietors of the country, who with the merchant classes formed the Commons, were ready to take the place of the ruined nobles. Imposing as the great ecclesiastical body still seemed from the memories of its past, its immense wealth, its tradition of statesmanship, it was rendered powerless by a want of spiritual enthusiasm, by a moral inertness, by its antagonism to the deeper religious convictions of the people, and its blind hostility to the intellectual movement which was beginning to stir the world. Somewhat of their old independence lingered indeed among the lower clergy and the monastic orders, but it was through its prelates that the Church exercised a directly political influence, and these showed a different temper from the clergy. Driven by sheer need, by the attack of the barons on their temporal possessions, and of the Lollards on their spiritual authority, into dependence on the Crown, they threw their weight on the side of the king with the simple view of averting by means of the monarchy the pillage of the Church. But in any wider political sense the influence of the body to which they belonged was insignificant. It is less obvious at first sight why the Commons should share the political ruin of the Church and the Lords, for the smaller county proprietors were growing fast, both in wealth and numbers, while the burgess class, as we have seen, was deriving fresh riches from the development of trade. But the result of the narrowing of the franchise and of the tampering with elections was now felt in the political insignificance of the Lower House. Reduced by these measures to a virtual dependence on the baronage, it fell with the fall of the class to which it looked for guidance and support. And while its rival forces disappeared, the Monarchy stood

ready to take their place. Not only indeed were the churchman, the squire, and the burgess powerless to vindicate liberty against the Crown, but the very interests of self-preservation led them at this moment to lay freedom at its feet. The Church still trembled at the progress of heresy. The close corporations of the towns needed protection for their privileges. The landowner shared with the trader a profound horror of the war and disorder which they had witnessed, and an almost reckless desire to entrust the Crown with any power which would prevent its return. But above all, the landed and moneyed classes clung passionately to the Monarchy, as the one great force left which could save them from social revolt. The rising of the Commons of Kent shows that the troubles against which the Statute of Laborers had been directed still remained as a formidable source of discontent. The great change in the character of agriculture indeed, which we have before described, the throwing together of the smaller holdings, the diminution of tillage, the increase of pasture-lands, had tended largely to swell the numbers and turbulence of the floating labor class. The riots against "enclosures," of which we first hear in the time of Henry the Sixth, and which became a constant feature of the Tudor period, are indications not only of a constant strife going on in every quarter between the landowner and the smaller peasant class, but of a mass of social discontent which was constantly seeking an outlet in violence and revolution. And at this moment the break-up of the military households of the nobles, and the return of wounded and disabled soldiers from the wars, added a new element of violence and disorder to the seething mass. It was in truth this social danger which lay at the root of the Tudor despotism. For the proprietary classes the repression of the poor was a question of life and death. Employer and proprietor were ready to surrender freedom into the hands of the one power which could preserve them from social anarchy. It was to the selfish panic of the landowners that England owed the Statute of Laborers and its terrible heritage of pauperism. It was to the selfish panic of both landowner and merchant that she owed the despotism of the Monarchy.

The founder of the new Monarchy was Edward the Fourth.

As a mere boy he showed himself among the ablest and the most pitiless of the warriors of the civil war. In the first flush of manhood he looked on with a cool ruthlessness while gray-haired nobles were hurried to the block. In his later race for power he had shown himself more subtle in his treachery than even Warwick himself. His triumph was no sooner won, however, than the young king seemed to abandon himself to a voluptuous indolence, to revels with the city wives of London and the caresses of mistresses like Jane Shore. Tall in stature and of singular beauty, his winning manners and gay carelessness of bearing secured him a popularity which had been denied to nobler kings. But his indolence and gaiety were mere veils beneath which Edward shrouded a profound political ability. No one could contrast more utterly in outward appearance with the subtle sovereigns of his time, with Louis the Eleventh or Ferdinand of Aragon; but his work was the same as theirs, and it was done as completely. While jesting with aldermen, or dallying with his mistresses, or idling over the new pages from the printing-press at Westminster, Edward was silently laying the foundations of an absolute rule. The almost total discontinuance of parliamentary life was in itself a revolution. Up to this moment the two Houses had played a part which became more and more prominent in the government of the realm. Under the two first kings of the House of Lancaster Parliament had been summoned almost every year. Not only had the right of self-taxation and initiation of laws been yielded explicitly to the Commons, but they had interfered with the administration of the State, had directed the application of subsidies, and called royal ministers to account by repeated instances of impeachment. Under Henry the Sixth an important step in constitutional progress had been made by abandoning the old form of presenting the requests of the Parliament in the form of petitions which were subsequently molded into statutes by the royal council; the statute itself, in its final form, was now presented for the royal assent, and the Crown was deprived of its former privilege of modifying it. But with the reign of Edward the Fourth not only does this progress cease, but the very action of Parliament itself comes almost to an end. For the first time since the days of

John not a single law which promoted freedom or remedied the abuses of power was even proposed. The necessity for summoning the two Houses had, in fact, been removed by the enormous tide of wealth which the confiscations of the civil war poured into the royal treasury. In the single bill of attainder which followed the victory of Towton, twelve great nobles and more than a hundred knights and squires were stripped of their estates to the king's profit. It was said that nearly a fifth of the land had passed into royal possession at one period or another of the civil war. A grant of the customs was given to the king for life. Edward added to his resources by trading on a vast scale. The royal ships, freighted with tin, wool, and cloth, made the name of the merchant king famous in the ports of Italy and Greece. The enterprises he planned against France, though frustrated by the refusal of Charles of Burgundy to cooperate with him in them, afforded a fresh financial resource; and the subsidies granted for a war which never took place swelled the royal Exchequer. But the pretext of war enabled Edward not only to increase his hoard, but to deal a deadly blow at the liberty which the Commons had won. Setting aside the usage of contracting loans by the authority of Parliament, Edward called before him the merchants of London and requested from each a gift or "benevolence," in proportion to the royal needs. The exaction was bitterly resented even by the classes with whom the king had been most popular, but for the moment resistance was fruitless, and the system of "benevolence" was soon to be developed into the forced loans of Wolsey and of Charles the First. It was to Edward that his Tudor successors owed the introduction of an elaborate spy system, the use of the rack, and the practise of interference with the purity of justice. In the history of intellectual progress alone his reign takes a brighter color, and the founder of a new despotism presents a claim to our regard as the patron of Caxton.

Literature indeed seemed at this moment to have died as utterly as freedom itself. The genius of Chaucer, and of the one or more poets whose works have been confounded with Chaucer's, defied for a while the pedantry, the affectation, the barrenness of their age; but the sudden close of this

poetic outburst left England to a crowd of poetasters, compilers, scribblers of interminable moralities, rhymers of chronicles, and translators from the worn-out field of French romance. Some faint trace of the liveliness and beauty of older models lingers among the heavy platitudes of Gower, but even this vanished from the didactic puerilities, the prosaic commonplaces, of Occleve and Lydgate. The literature of the Middle Ages was dying out with the Middle Ages themselves; in letters as in life their thirst for knowledge had spent itself in the barren mazes of the scholastic philosophy, their ideal of warlike nobleness faded away before the gaudy travesty of a spurious chivalry, and the mystic enthusiasm of their devotion shrank at the touch of persecution into a narrow orthodoxy and a flat morality. The clergy, who had concentrated in themselves the intellectual effort of the older time, were ceasing to be an intellectual class at all. The monasteries were no longer seats of learning. "I found in them," said Poggio, an Italian traveler twenty years after Chaucer's death, "men given up to sensuality in abundance, but very few lovers of learning, and those of a barbarous sort, skilled more in quibbles and sophisms than in literature." The erection of colleges, which was beginning, failed to arrest the quick decline of the universities both in the numbers and learning of their students. Those at Oxford amounted to only a fifth of the scholars who had attended its lectures a century before, and "Oxford Latin" became proverbial for a jargon in which the very tradition of grammar had been lost. All literary production was nearly at an end. Historical composition lingered on indeed in compilations of extracts from past writers, such as make up the so-called works of Walsingham, in jejune monastic annals, or worthless popular compendiums. But the only real trace of mental activity is to be found in the numerous treatises on alchemy and magic, on the elixir of life or the philosopher's stone, a fungous growth which most unequivocally witnesses to the progress of intellectual decay. On the other hand, while the older literary class was dying out, a glance beneath the surface shows us the stir of a new interest in knowledge among the masses of the people itself. The correspondence of the Paston family, which has been happily preserved, not only

displays a fluency and vivacity as well as a grammatical correctness which would have been impossible in familiar letters a few years before, but shows country squires discussing about books and gathering libraries. The very character of the authorship of the time, its love of compendiums and abridgments of the scientific and historical knowledge of its day, its dramatic performances or mysteries, the commonplace morality of its poets, the popularity of its rhymed chronicles, are additional proofs that literature was ceasing to be the possession of a purely intellectual class and was beginning to appeal to the people at large. The increased use of linen paper in place of the costlier parchment helped in the popularization of letters. In no former age had finer copies of books been produced; in none had so many been transcribed. This increased demand for their production caused the processes of copying and illuminating manuscripts to be transferred from the scriptoria of the religious houses into the hands of trade gilds, like the Gild of St. John at Bruges, or the Brothers of the Pen at Brussels. It was, in fact, this increase of demand for books, pamphlets, or fly-sheets, especially of a grammatical or religious character, in the middle of the fifteenth century that brought about the introduction of printing. We meet with it first in rude sheets simply struck off from wooden blocks, "block-books" as they are now called, and later on in works printed from separate and movable types. Originating at Maintz with the three famous printers, Gutenberg, Fust, and Schöffer, the new process traveled southward to Strasburg, crossed the Alps to Venice, where it lent itself through the Aldi to the spread of Greek literature in Europe, and then floated down the Rhine to the towns of Flanders. It was probably at the press of Colard Mansion, in a little room over the porch of St. Donat's at Bruges, that Caxton learnt the art which he was the first to introduce into England.

A Kentish boy by birth, but apprenticed to a London mercer, William Caxton had already spent thirty years of his manhood in Flanders, as governor of the English gild of merchant adventurers there, when we find him engaged as copyist in the service of Edward's sister, Duchess Margaret of Burgundy. But the tedious process of copying was soon

thrown aside for the new art which Colard Mansion had introduced into Bruges. "For as much as in the writing of the same," Caxton tells us in the preface to his first printed work, the "Tales of Troy," "my pen is worn, my hand weary and not steadfast, mine eyes dimmed with over much looking on the white paper, and my courage not so prone and ready to labor as it hath been, and that age creepeth on me daily and feebleth all the body, and also because I have promised to divers gentlemen and to my friends to address to them as hastily as I might the said book, therefore I have practised and learned at my great charge and dispense to ordain this said book in print after the manner and form as ye may see, and is not written with pen and ink as other books be, to the end that every man may have them at once, for all the books of this story here emprynted as ye see were begun in one day and also finished in one day." The printing-press was the precious freight he brought back to England, after an absence of five and thirty years. Through the next fifteen, at an age when other men look for ease and retirement, we see him plunging with characteristic energy into his new occupation. His "red pale," or heraldic shield marked with a red bar down the middle, invited buyers to the press established in the Almonry at Westminster, a little enclosure containing a chapel and almshouses near the west front of the church, where the alms of the abbey were distributed to the poor. "If it please any man, spiritual or temporal," runs his advertisement, "to buy any pyes of two or three commemorations of Salisbury all emprynted after the form of the present letter, which be well and truly correct, let him come to Westminster into the Almonry at the red pale, and he shall have them good chepe." He was a practical man of business, as this advertisement shows, no rival of the Venetian Aldi or of the classical printers of Rome, but resolved to get a living from his trade, supplying priests with service books, and preachers with sermons, furnishing the clerk with his "Golden Legend," and knight and baron with "joyous and pleasant histories of chivalry." But while careful to win his daily bread, he found time to do much for what of higher literature lay fairly to hand. He printed all the English poetry of any moment which was then in existence. His

reverence for "that worshipful man, Geoffrey Chaucer," who "ought to be eternally remembered," is shown not merely by his edition of the "Canterbury Tales," but by his reprint of them when a purer text of the poem offered itself. The poems of Lydgate and Gower were added to those of Chaucer. The "Chronicle of Brut" and Higden's "Polychronicon" were the only available works of an historical character then existing in the English tongue, and Caxton not only printed them but himself continued the latter up to his own time. A translation of Boethius, a version of the "Æneid" from the French, and a tract or two of Cicero, were the stray first-fruits of the classical press in England.

Busy as was Caxton's printing-press, he was even busier as a translator than as a printer. More than four thousand of his printed pages are from works of his own rendering. The need of these translations shows the popular drift of literature at the time; but keen as the demand seems to have been, there is nothing mechanical in the temper with which Caxton prepared to meet it. A natural, simple-hearted literary taste and enthusiasm, especially for the style and forms of language, breaks out in his curious prefaces. "Having no work in hand," he says in the preface to his "Æneid," "I sitting in my study where as lay many divers pamphlets and books, happened that to my hand came a little book in French, which late was translated out of Latin by some noble clerk of France — which book is named Eneydos, and made in Latin by that noble poet and great clerk Vergyl — in which I had great pleasure by reason of the fair and honest termes and wordes in French which I never saw to-fore-like, none so pleasant nor so well-ordered, which book as me seemed should be much requisite for noble men to see, as well for the eloquence as the histories; and when I had advised me to this said book I deliberated and concluded to translate it into English, and forthwith took a pen and ink and wrote a leaf or twain." But the work of translation involved a choice of English which made Caxton's work important in the history of our language. He stood between two schools of translation, that of French affectation and English pedantry. It was a moment when the character of our literary tongue was being settled, and it is curious to see in his own words the

struggle over it which was going on in Caxton's time. "Some honest and great clerks have been with me and desired me to write the most curious terms that I could find"; on the other hand, "some gentlemen of late blamed me, saying that in my translations I had over many curious terms which could not be understood of common people, and desired me to use old and homely terms in my translations." "Fain would I please every man," comments the good-humored printer, but his sturdy sense saved him alike from the temptations of the court and the schools. His own taste pointed to English, but "to the common terms that be daily used" rather than to the English of his antiquarian advisers. "I took an old book and read therein, and certainly the English was so rude and broad I could not well understand it," while the Old-English charters which the Abbot of Westminster lent as models from the archives of his house seemed "more like to Dutch than to English." On the other hand, to adopt current phraseology was by no means easy at a time when even the speech of common talk was in a state of rapid flux. "Our language now used varieth far from that which was used and spoken when I was born." Not only so, but the tongue of each shire was still peculiar to itself, and hardly intelligible to men of another county. "Common English that is spoken in one shire varieth from another so much, that in my days happened that certain merchants were in a ship in Thames, for to have sailed over the sea into Zealand, and for lack of wind they tarried at Foreland, and went on land for to refresh them. And one of them, named Sheffield, a mercer, came into a house and asked for meat, and especially he asked them after eggs. And the good wife answered that she could speak no French. And the merchant was angry, for he also could speak no French, but would have had eggs, but she understood him not. And then at last another said he would have eyren, then the good wife said she understood him well. Lo! what should a man in these days now write," adds the puzzled printer, "eggs or eyren? Certainly it is hard to please every man by cause of diversity and change of language." His own mother tongue too was that of "Kent in the Weald, where I doubt not is spoken as broad and rude English as in any place in England"; and coupling this with his long

absence in Flanders, we can hardly wonder at the confession he makes over his first translation, that "when all these things came to fore me, after that I had made and written a five or six quires, I fell in despair of this work, and purposed never to have continued therein, and the quires laid apart, and in two years after labored no more in this work."

He was still, however, busy translating when he died. All difficulties, in fact, were lightened by the general interest which his labors aroused. When the length of the "Golden Legend" makes him "half desperate to have accomplished it" and ready to "lay it apart," the Earl of Arundel solicits him in nowise to leave it and promises a yearly fee of a buck in summer and a doe in winter, once it were done. "Many noble and divers gentlemen of this realm came and demanded many and often times wherefore I have not made and imprinted the noble history of the 'San Graal.'" We see his visitors discussing with the sagacious printer the historic existence of Arthur. Duchess Margaret of Somerset lent him her "Blanchardine and Eglantine"; an archdeacon of Colchester brought him his translation of the work called "Cato"; a mercer of London pressed him to undertake the "Royal Book" of Philip le Bel. The queen's brother, Earl Rivers, chatted with him over his own translation of the "Sayings of the Philosophers." Even kings showed their interest in his work; his "Tully" was printed under the patronage of Edward the Fourth, his "Order of Chivalry" dedicated to Richard the Third, his "Facts of Arms" published at the desire of Henry the Seventh. The fashion of large and gorgeous libraries had passed from the French to the English princes of his day: Henry the Sixth had a valuable collection of books; that of the Louvre was seized by Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, and formed the basis of the fine library which he presented to the University of Oxford. Great nobles took an active and personal part of the literary revival. The warrior, Sir John Fastolfe, was a well-known lover of books. Earl Rivers was himself one of the authors of the day; he found leisure in the intervals of pilgrimages and politics to translate the "Sayings of the Philosophers" and a couple of religious tracts for Caxton's press. A friend of far greater intellectual distinction, however, than these was

found in John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester. He had wandered during the reign of Henry the Sixth in search of learning to Italy, had studied at her universities, and become a teacher at Padua, where the elegance of his Latinity drew tears from the most learned of the popes, Pius the Second, better known as Æneas Sylvius. Caxton can find no words warm enough to express his admiration of one "which in his time flowered in virtue and cunning, to whom I know none like among the lords of the temporality in science and moral virtue." But the ruthlessness of the Renascence appeared in Tiptoft side by side with its intellectual vigor, and the fall of one whose cruelty had earned him the surname of "the Butcher" even amidst the horrors of civil war was greeted with sorrow by none but the faithful printer. "What great loss was it," he says in a preface long after his fall, "of that noble, virtuous, and well-disposed lord; when I remember and advertise his life, his science, and his virtue, me thinketh (God not displeased) over great a loss of such a man, considering his estate and cunning."

Among the nobles who encouraged the work of Caxton we have already seen the figure of the king's youngest brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Ruthless and subtle as Edward himself, the duke at once came to the front with a scheme of daring ambition when the succession of a boy of thirteen woke again the fierce rivalries of the court. On the king's death Richard hastened to secure the person of his nephew, Edward the Fifth, to overthrow the power of the queen's family, and to receive from the council the office of Protector of the realm. Little more than a month had passed, when suddenly entering the council-chamber, he charged Lord Hastings, the chief adviser of the late king and loyal adherent of his sons, with sorcery and designs upon his life. As he dashed his hand upon the table the room was filled with soldiers. "I will not dine," said the duke, addressing Hastings, "till they have brought me your head"; and the powerful minister was hurried to instant execution in the courtyard of the Tower. The Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Ely were thrown into prison, and every check on Richard's designs was removed. Only one step remained to be taken, and two months after his brother's death the duke consented after some show of reluc-

tance to receive a petition presented by a body of lords and others in the name of the three estates, which, setting aside Edward's children as the fruit of an unlawful marriage and those of Clarence as disabled by his attainder, besought him to take the office and title of king. His young nephews, Edward V. and his brother the Duke of York, were flung into the Tower, and there murdered, as was alleged, by their uncle's order; while the queen's brother and son, Lord Rivers and Sir Richard Grey, were hurried to execution. Morton, the Bishop of Ely, imprisoned under Buckingham in Wales, took advantage of the disappearance of the two boys to found a scheme which was to unite the discontented Yorkists with what remained of the Lancastrian party, and to link both bodies in a wide conspiracy. All the descendants of Henry IV. had passed away, but the line of John of Gaunt still survived. The Lady Margaret Beaufort, the last representative of the House of Somerset, had married the Earl of Richmond, Edmund Tudor, and become the mother of Henry Tudor. In the act which legitimated the Beauforts an illegal clause had been inserted by Henry IV. which barred their succession to the Crown; but as the last remaining scion of the line of Lancaster Henry's claim was acknowledged by the partisans of his house, and he had been driven to seek a refuge in Brittany from the jealous hostility of the Yorkist sovereigns. Morton's plan was the marriage of Henry Tudor with Elizabeth, the daughter and heiress of Edward IV., and with Buckingham's aid a formidable revolt was organized. The outbreak was quickly put down. But daring as was Richard's natural temper, it was not to mere violence that he trusted in his seizure of the throne. During his brother's reign he had watched keenly the upgrowth of public discontent as the new policy of the Monarchy developed itself, and it was as the restorer of its older liberties that he appealed for popular support. "We be determined," said the citizens of London in a petition to the king, "rather to adventure and to commit us to the peril of our lives and jeopardy of death, than to live in such thraldom and bondage as we have lived long time heretofore, oppressed and injured by extortions and new impositions against the laws of God and man and the liberty and laws of this realm, wherein every Eng-

lishman is inherited." Richard met the appeal by again convoking Parliament, which, as we have seen, had been all but discontinued under Edward, and by sweeping measures of reform. In the one session of his brief reign the practise of extorting money by "benevolences" was declared illegal, while grants of pardons and remission of forfeitures reversed in some measure the policy of terror by which Edward at once held the country in awe and filled his treasury. Numerous statutes broke the slumbers of parliamentary legislation. A series of mercantile enactments strove to protect the growing interests of English commerce. The king's love of literature showed itself in the provision that no statutes should act as a hindrance "to any artificer or merchant stranger, of what nation or country he be, for bringing unto this realm or selling by retail or otherwise of any manner of books, written or imprinted." His prohibition of the iniquitous seizure of goods before conviction of felony, which had prevailed during Edward's reign, his liberation of the bondmen who still remained unenfranchised on the royal domain, and his religious foundations, show Richard's keen anxiety to purchase a popularity in which the bloody opening of his reign might be forgotten. But as the news of the royal children's murder slowly spread, the most pitiless stood aghast at this crowning deed of blood. The pretense of constitutional rule, too, was soon thrown off, and a levy of benevolences in defiance of the statute which had just been passed woke general indignation. The king felt himself safe; he had even won the queen mother's consent to his marriage with Elizabeth; and Henry, alone and in exile, seemed a small danger. But a wide conspiracy at once revealed itself when Henry landed at Milford Haven and advanced through Wales. He no sooner encountered the royal army at Bosworth Field in Leicestershire than treachery decided the day. Abandoned ere the battle began by a division of his forces under Lord Stanley, and as it opened by a second body under the Earl of Northumberland, Richard dashed, with a cry of "Treason, treason," into the thick of the fight. In the fury of his despair he had already flung the Lancastrian standard to the ground and hewed his way into the very presence of his rival, when he fell overpowered by numbers, and the crown which he had worn, and which

was found as the struggle ended lying near a hawthorn bush, was placed on the head of the conqueror.

With the accession of Henry the Seventh ended the long bloodshed of the civil wars. The two warring lines were united by his marriage with Elizabeth: his only dangerous rivals were removed by the successive deaths of the nephews of Edward the Fourth, John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, a son of Edward's sister, who had been acknowledged as his successor by Richard the Third; and the Earl of Warwick, a son of Edward's brother the Duke of Clarence, and next male heir of the Yorkist line. Two remarkable impostors succeeded for a time in exciting formidable revolts, Lambert Simnel, under the name of the Earl of Warwick, and Perkin Warbeck, who personated the Duke of York, the second of the children murdered in the Tower. Defeat, however, reduced the first to the post of scullion in the royal kitchen; and the second, after far stranger adventures, and the recognition of his claims by the kings of Scotland and France, as well as by the Duchess Dowager of Burgundy, whom he claimed as his aunt, was captured and four years later hanged at Tyburn. Revolt only proved more clearly the strength which had been given to the new Monarchy by the revolution which had taken place in the art of war. The introduction of gunpowder had ruined feudalism. The mounted and heavily armed knight gave way to the meaner footman. Fortresses which had been impregnable against the attacks of the Middle Ages crumbled before the new artillery. Although gunpowder had been in use as early as Crécy, it was not till the accession of the House of Lancaster that it was really brought into effective employment as a military resource. But the revolution in warfare was immediate. The wars of Henry the Fifth were wars of sieges. The "Last of the Barons," as Warwick has picturesquely been styled, relied mainly on his train of artillery. It was artillery that turned the day at Barnet and Tewkesbury, and that gave Henry the Seventh his victory over the formidable dangers which assailed him. The strength which the change gave to the Crown was, in fact, almost irresistible. Throughout the Middle Ages the call of a great baron had been enough to raise a formidable revolt. Yeomen and retainers took down

the bow from their chimney-corner, knights buckled on their armor, and in a few days an army threatened the throne. But without artillery such an army was now helpless, and the one train of artillery in the kingdom lay at the disposal of the king. It was the consciousness of his strength which enabled the new sovereign to quietly resume the policy of Edward the Fourth. He was forced, indeed, by the circumstances of his descent to base his right to the throne on a parliamentary title. Without reference either to the claim of blood or conquest, the Houses enacted simply "that the inheritance of the Crown should be, rest, remain, and abide in the most royal person of their sovereign lord, King Henry the Seventh, and the heirs of his body lawfully ensuing." But the policy of Edward was faithfully followed, and Parliament was but twice convened during the last thirteen years of Henry's reign. The chief aim, indeed, of the king was the accumulation of a treasure which would relieve him from the need of ever appealing for its aid. Subsidies granted for the support of wars which Henry evaded formed the base of a royal treasure, which was swelled by the revival of dormant claims of the Crown, by the exaction of fines for the breach of forgotten tenures, and by a host of petty extortions. A dilemma of his favorite minister, which received the name of "Morton's fork," extorted gifts to the Exchequer from men who lived handsomely on the ground that their wealth was manifest, and from those who lived plainly on the plea that economy had made them wealthy. Still greater sums were drawn from those who were compromised in the revolts which checkered the king's rule. So successful were these efforts that at the end of his reign Henry bequeathed a hoard of two millions to his successor. The same imitation of Edward's policy was seen in Henry's civil government. Broken as was the strength of the baronage, there still remained lords whom the new monarch watched with a jealous solicitude. Their power lay in the hosts of disorderly retainers who swarmed round their houses, ready to furnish a force in case of revolt, while in peace they became centers of outrage and defiance to the law. Edward had ordered the dissolution of these military households in his Statute of Liveries, and the statute was enforced by Henry with the

utmost severity. On a visit to the Earl of Oxford, one of the most devoted adherents of the Lancastrian cause, the king found two long lines of liveried retainers drawn up to receive him. "I thank you for your good cheer, my lord," said Henry as they parted, "but I may not endure to have my laws broken in my sight. My attorney must speak with you." The earl was glad to escape with a fine of £10,000. It was with a special view to the suppression of this danger that Henry employed the criminal jurisdiction of the royal council. He appointed a committee of his council as a regular court, to which the place where it usually sat gave the name of the Court of Star Chamber. The king's aim was probably little more than a purpose to enforce order on the land by bringing the great nobles before his own judgment-seat; but the establishment of the court as a regular and no longer an exceptional tribunal, whose traditional powers were confirmed by parliamentary statute, and where the absence of a jury canceled the prisoner's right to be tried by his peers, furnished his son with his readiest instrument of tyranny. But though the drift of Henry's policy was steady in the direction of despotism, his temper seemed to promise the reign of a poetic dreamer rather than of a statesman. The spare form, the sallow face, the quick eye, the shy, solitary humor broken by outbursts of pleasant converse or genial sarcasm, told of an inner concentration and enthusiasm. His tastes were literary and artistic; he was a patron of the new printing-press, a lover of books and of art. But life gave Henry little leisure for dreams or culture. Wrapt in schemes of foreign intrigue, struggling with dangers at home, he could take small part in the one movement which stirred England during his reign, the great intellectual revolution which bears the name of the Revival of Letters.

Section IV. — The New Learning, 1509–1520

Great as were the issues of Henry's policy, it shrinks into littleness if we turn from it to the weighty movements which were now stirring the minds of men. The world was passing through changes more momentous than any it had witnessed since the victory of Christianity and the fall of the Roman

Empire. Its physical bounds were suddenly enlarged. The discoveries of Copernicus revealed to man the secret of the universe. Portuguese mariners doubled the Cape of Good Hope and anchored their merchant fleets in the harbors of India. Columbus crossed the untraversed ocean to add a New World to the Old. Sebastian Cabot, starting from the port of Bristol, threaded his way among the icebergs of Labrador. This sudden contact with new lands, new faiths, new races of men, quickened the slumbering intelligence of Europe into a strange curiosity. The first book of voyages that told of the Western World, the "Travels of Amerigo Vespucci," were soon "in everybody's hands." The "Utopia" of More, in its wide range of speculation on every subject of human thought and action, tells us how roughly and utterly the narrowness and limitation of human life had been broken up. The capture of Constantinople by the Turks, and the flight of its Greek scholars to the shores of Italy, opened anew the science and literature of the older world at the very hour when the intellectual energy of the Middle Ages had sunk into exhaustion. The exiled Greek scholars were welcomed in Italy, and Florence, so long the home of freedom and of art, became the home of an intellectual revival. The poetry of Homer, the drama of Sophocles, the philosophy of Aristotle and of Plato woke again to life beneath the shadow of the mighty dome with which Brunelleschi had just crowned the City by the Arno. All the restless energy which Florence had so long thrown into the cause of liberty she flung, now that her liberty was reft from her, into the cause of letters. The galleys of her merchants brought back manuscripts from the East as the most precious portion of their freight. In the palaces of her nobles fragments of classic sculpture ranged themselves beneath the frescos of Ghirlandajo. The recovery of a treatise of Cicero's or a tract of Sallust's from the dust of a monastic library was welcomed by the group of statesmen and artists who gathered in the Rucellai gardens, with a thrill of enthusiasm. Foreign scholars soon flocked over the Alps to learn Greek, the key of the new knowledge, from the Florentine teachers. Grocyn, a fellow of New College, was perhaps the first Englishman who studied under the Greek exile, Chalcondylas; and the Greek lectures which

he delivered in Oxford on his return mark the opening of a new period in our history. Physical as well as literary activity awoke with the rediscovery of the teachers of Greece, and the continuous progress of English science may be dated from the day when Linacre, another Oxford student, returned from the lectures of the Florentine Politian to revive the older tradition of medicine by his translation of Galen.

But from the first it was manifest that the revival of letters would take a tone in England very different from the tone it had taken in Italy, a tone less literary, less largely human, but more moral, more religious, more practical in its bearings both upon society and politics. The awakening of a rational Christianity, whether in England or in the Teutonic world at large, began with the Italian studies of John Colet; and the vigor and earnestness of Colet were the best proof of the strength with which the new movement was to affect English religion. He came back to Oxford utterly untouched by the Platonic mysticism or the semi-serious infidelity which characterized the group of scholars round Lorenzo the Magnificent. He was hardly more influenced by their literary enthusiasm. The knowledge of Greek seems to have had one almost exclusive end for him, and this was a religious end. Greek was the key by which he could unlock the Gospels and the New Testament, and in these he thought that he could find a new religious standing-ground. It was this resolve of Colet to fling aside the traditional dogmas of his day and to discover a rational and practical religion in the Gospels themselves which gave its peculiar stamp to the theology of the Renascence. His faith stood simply on a vivid realization of the person of Christ. In the prominence which such a view gave to the moral life, in his free criticism of the earlier Scriptures, in his tendency to simple forms of doctrine and confessions of faith, Colet struck the key-note of a mode of religious thought as strongly in contrast with that of the later Reformation as with that of Catholicism itself. The allegorical and mystical theology on which the Middle Ages had spent their intellectual vigor to such little purpose fell at one blow before his rejection of all but the historical and grammatical sense of the Biblical text. The great fabric of belief built up by the medieval doctors seemed

to him simply "the corruptions of the schoolmen." In the life and sayings of its Founder he found a simple and rational Christianity, whose fittest expression was the Apostles' creed. "About the rest," he said with characteristic impatience, "let divines dispute as they will." Of his attitude towards the coarser aspects of the current religion his behavior at a later time before the famous shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury gives us a rough indication. As the blaze of its jewels, its costly sculptures, its elaborate metal work, burst on Colet's view, he suggested with bitter irony that a saint so lavish to the poor in his lifetime would certainly prefer that they should possess the wealth heaped round him since his death. With petulant disgust he rejected the rags of the martyr which were offered for his adoration, and the shoe which was offered for his kiss. The earnestness, the religious zeal, the very impatience and want of sympathy with the past, which we see in every word and act of the man, burst out in the lectures on St. Paul's Epistles which he delivered at Oxford. Even to the most critical among his hearers he seemed "like one inspired, raised in voice, eye, his whole countenance and mien, out of himself." Severe as was the outer life of the new teacher, a severity marked by his plain black robe and the frugal table which he preserved amidst his later dignities, his lively conversation, his frank simplicity, the purity and nobleness of his life, even the keen outbursts of his troublesome temper, endeared him to a group of scholars among whom Erasmus and Thomas More stood in the foremost rank.

"Greece has crossed the Alps," cried the exiled Argyropoulos on hearing a translation of Thucydides by the German Reuchlin; but the glory, whether of Reuchlin or of the Teutonic scholars who followed him, was soon eclipsed by that of Erasmus. His enormous industry, the vast store of classical learning which he gradually accumulated, Erasmus shared with others of his day. In patristic reading he may have stood beneath Luther; in originality and profoundness of thought he was certainly inferior to More. His theology, though he made a far greater mark on the world by it than even by his scholarship, he derived almost without change from Colet. But his combination of vast learning with keen

observation, of acuteness of remark with a lively fancy, of genial wit with a perfect good sense,—his union of as sincere a piety and as profound a zeal for rational religion as Colet's with a dispassionate fairness towards older faiths, a large love of secular culture, and a genial freedom and play of mind,—this union was his own, and it was through this that Erasmus embodied for the Teutonic peoples the quickening influence of the New Learning during the long scholar life which began at Paris and ended amidst darkness and sorrow at Basel. At the time of Colet's return from Italy Erasmus was young and comparatively unknown, but the chivalrous enthusiasm of the new movement breaks out in his letters from Paris, whither he had wandered as a scholar. "I have given up my whole soul to Greek learning," he writes, "and as soon as I get any money I shall buy Greek books—and then I shall buy some clothes." It was in despair of reaching Italy that the young scholar made his way to Oxford, as the one place on this side the Alps where he would be enabled through the teaching of Grocyn to acquire a knowledge of Greek. But he had no sooner arrived there than all feeling of regret vanished away. "I have found in Oxford," he writes, "so much polish and learning that now I hardly care about going to Italy at all, save for the sake of having been there. When I listen to my friend Colet it seems like listening to Plato himself. Who does not wonder at the wide range of Grocyn's knowledge? What can be more searching, deep, and refined than the judgment of Linacre? When did nature mold a temper more gentle, endearing, and happy than the temper of Thomas More?"

But the new movement was far from being bounded by the walls of Oxford. The silent influences of time were working, indeed, steadily for its cause. The printing-press was making letters the common property of all. In the last thirty years of the fifteenth century ten thousand editions of books and pamphlets are said to have been published throughout Europe, the most important half of them of course in Italy; and all the Latin authors were accessible to every student before it closed. Almost all the more valuable authors of Greece were published in the first twenty years of the century which followed. The profound influence of this burst of

the two great classic literatures upon the world at once made itself felt. "For the first time," to use the picturesque phrase of M. Taine, "men opened their eyes and saw." The human mind seemed to gather new energies at the sight of the vast field which opened before it. It attacked every province of knowledge, and it transformed all. Experimental science, the science of philology, the science of politics, the critical investigation of religious truth, all took their origin from the Renascence — this 'New Birth' of the world. Art, if it lost much in purity and propriety, gained in scope and in the fearlessness of its love of nature. Literature, if crushed for the moment by the overpowering attraction of the great models of Greece and Rome, revived with a grandeur of form, a large spirit of humanity, such as it had never known since their day. In England the influence of the new movement extended far beyond the little group in which it had a few years before seemed concentrated. The great churchmen became its patrons. Langton, Bishop of Winchester, took delight in examining the young scholars of his episcopal family every evening, and sent all the most promising of them to study across the Alps. Learning found a yet warmer friend in the Archbishop of Canterbury. Immersed as Archbishop Warham was in the business of the State, he was no mere politician. The eulogies which Erasmus lavished on him while he lived, his praises of the primate's learning, of his ability in business, his pleasant humor, his modesty, his fidelity to friends, may pass for what eulogies of living men are commonly worth. But it is difficult to doubt the sincerity of the glowing picture which he drew of him when death had destroyed all interest in mere adulation. The letters indeed which passed between the great churchman and the wandering scholar, the quiet, simple-hearted grace which amidst constant instances of munificence preserved the perfect equality of literary friendship, the enlightened piety to which Erasmus could address the noble words of his preface to St. Jerome, confirm the judgment of every good man of Warham's day. In the simplicity of his life the archbishop offered a striking contrast to the luxurious nobles of his time. He cared nothing for the pomp, the sensual pleasures, the hunting and dicing in which they too commonly indulged. An hour's pleasant

reading, a quiet chat with some learned newcomer, alone broke the endless round of civil and ecclesiastical business. Few men realized so thoroughly as Warham the new conception of an intellectual and moral equality before which the old social distinctions of the world were to vanish away. His favorite relaxation was to sup among a group of scholarly visitors, enjoying their fun and retorting with fun of his own. But the scholar world found more than supper or fun at the primate's board. His purse was ever open to relieve their poverty. "Had I found such a patron in my youth," Erasmus wrote long after, "I too might have been counted among the fortunate ones." It was with Grocyn that Erasmus on a second visit to England rowed up the river to Warham's board at Lambeth, and in spite of an unpromising beginning the acquaintance turned out wonderfully well. The primate loved him, Erasmus wrote home, as if he were his father or his brother, and his generosity surpassed that of all his friends. He offered him a sinecure, and when he declined it he bestowed on him a pension of a hundred crowns a year. When Erasmus wandered to Paris it was Warham's invitation which recalled him to England. When the rest of his patrons left him to starve on the sour beer of Cambridge it was Warham who sent him fifty angels. "I wish there were thirty legions of them," the primate puns in his good-humored way.

Real, however, as this progress was, the group of scholars who represented the New Learning in England still remained a little one through the reign of Henry the Seventh. But a "New Order," to use their own enthusiastic term, dawned on them with the accession of his son. Henry the Eighth had hardly completed his eighteenth year when he mounted the throne, but the beauty of his person, his vigor and skill in arms, seemed matched by a frank and generous temper and a nobleness of political aims. He gave promise of a more popular system of government by checking at once the extortion which had been practised under color of enforcing forgotten laws, and by bringing his father's financial ministers, Empson and Dudley, to trial on a charge of treason. No accession ever excited higher expectations among a people than that of Henry the Eighth. Pole, his bitterest enemy,

confessed at a later time that the king was of a temper at the beginning of his reign "from which all excellent things might have been hoped." Already in stature and strength a king among his fellows, taller than any, bigger than any, a mighty wrestler, a mighty hunter, an archer of the best, a knight who bore down rider after rider in the tourney, the young monarch combined with his bodily lordliness a largeness and versatility of mind which was to be the special characteristic of the age that had begun. His sympathies were known to be heartily with the New Learning; for Henry was not only himself a fair scholar, but even in boyhood had roused by his wit and attainments the wonder of Erasmus. The great scholar hurried back to England to pour out his exultation in the "Praise of Folly," a song of triumph over the old world of ignorance and bigotry which was to vanish away before the light and knowledge of the new reign. Folly, in his amusing little book, mounts a pulpit in cap and bells and pelts with her satire the absurdities of the world around her, the superstition of the monk, the pedantry of the grammarian, the dogmatism of the doctors of the schools, the selfishness and tyranny of kings.

The irony of Erasmus was backed by the earnest effort of Colet. Four years before, he had been called from Oxford to the deanery of St. Paul's, when he became the great preacher of his day, the predecessor of Latimer in his simplicity, his directness, and his force. He seized the opportunity to commence the work of educational reform by the foundation of his own Grammar School, beside St. Paul's. The bent of its founder's mind was shown by the image of the Child Jesus over the master's chair, with the words "Hear ye Him" graven beneath it. "Lift up your little white hands for me," wrote the dean to his scholars, in words which show the tenderness that lay beneath the stern outer seeming of the man, — "for me which prayeth for you to God." All the educational designs of the reformers were carried out in the new foundation. The old methods of instruction were superseded by fresh grammars composed by Erasmus and other scholars for its use. Lilly, an Oxford student who had studied Greek in the East, was placed at its head. The injunctions of the founder aimed at the union of

rational religion with sound learning, at the exclusion of the scholastic logic, and at the steady diffusion of the two classical literatures. The more bigoted of the clergy were quick to take alarm. "No wonder," More wrote to the dean, "your school raises a storm, for it is like the wooden horse in which armed Greeks were hidden for the ruin of barbarous Troy." But the cry of alarm passed helplessly away. Not only did the study of Greek creep gradually into the schools which existed, but the example of Colet was followed by a crowd of imitators. More grammar schools, it has been said, were founded in the latter years of Henry than in the three centuries before. The impulse grew only stronger as the direct influence of the New Learning passed away. The grammar schools of Edward the Sixth and of Elizabeth, in a word the system of middle-class education which by the close of the century had changed the very face of England, were amongst the results of Colet's foundation of St. Paul's. But the "armed Greeks" of More's apologue found a yet wider field in the reform of the higher education of the country. On the universities the influence of the New Learning was like a passing from death to life. Erasmus gives us a picture of what happened at Cambridge, where he was himself for a time a teacher of Greek. "Scarcely thirty years ago nothing was taught here but the *Parva Logicalia*, Alexander, antiquated exercises from Aristotle, and the *Quæstiones* of Scotus. As time went on better studies were added, mathematics, a new, or at any rate a renovated, Aristotle, and a knowledge of Greek literature. What has been the result? The university is now so flourishing that it can compete with the best universities of the age." Latimer and Croke returned from Italy and carried on the work of Erasmus at Cambridge, where Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, himself one of the foremost scholars of the new movement, lent it his powerful support. At Oxford the Revival met with a fiercer opposition. The contest took the form of boyish frays, in which the young partisans and opponents of the New Learning took sides as Greeks and Trojans. The king himself had to summon one of its fiercest enemies to Woodstock, and to impose silence on the tirades which were delivered from the university pulpit. The preacher alleged that he was carried away

by the Spirit. "Yes," retorted the king, "by the spirit, not of wisdom, but of folly." But even at Oxford the contest was soon at an end. Fox, Bishop of Winchester, established the first Greek lecture there in his new college of Corpus Christi, and a professorship of Greek was at a later time established by the Crown. "The students," wrote an eye-witness, "rush to Greek letters, they endure watching, fasting, toil, and hunger in the pursuit of them." The work was crowned at last by the munificent foundation of Cardinal College, to share in whose teaching Wolsey invited the most eminent of the living scholars of Europe, and for whose library he promised to obtain copies of all the manuscripts in the Vatican.

From the reform of education the New Learning pressed on to the reform of the Church. Warham still flung around the movement his steady protection, and it was by his commission that Colet was enabled to address the Convocation of the clergy in words which set before them with unsparing severity the religious ideal of the New Learning. "Would that for once," burst forth the fiery preacher, "you would remember your name and profession and take thought for the reformation of the Church! Never was it more necessary, and never did the state of the Church need more vigorous endeavors." "We are troubled with heretics," he went on, "but no heresy of theirs is so fatal to us and to the people at large as the vicious and depraved lives of the clergy. That is the worst heresy of all." It was the reform of the bishops that must precede that of the clergy, the reform of the clergy that would lead to a general revival of religion in the people at large. The accumulation of benefices, the luxury and worldliness of the priesthood, must be abandoned. The prelates ought to be busy preachers, to forsake the court and labor in their own dioceses. Care should be taken for the ordination and promotion of worthier ministers, residence should be enforced, the low standard of clerical morality should be raised. It is plain that the men of the New Learning looked forward, not to a reform of doctrine, but to a reform of life, not to a revolution which should sweep away the older superstitions which they despised, but to a regeneration of spiritual feeling before which they would inevitably vanish. Colet

was soon charged with heresy by the Bishop of London. Warham, however, protected him, and Henry, to whom the dean was denounced, bade him go boldly on. "Let every man have his own doctor," said the young king, after a long interview, "and let every man favor his own, but this man is the doctor for me."

But for the success of the new reform, a reform which could only be wrought out by the tranquil spread of knowledge and the gradual enlightenment of the human conscience, the one thing needful was peace; and the young king to whom the scholar group looked was already longing for war. Long as peace had been established between the two countries, the designs of England upon the French crown had never been really waived, and Henry's pride dwelt on the older claims of England to Normandy and Guienne. Edward the Fourth and Henry the Seventh had each clung to a system of peace, only broken by the vain efforts to save Brittany from French invasion. But the growth of the French monarchy in extent and power through the policy of Louis the Eleventh, his extinction of the great feudatories, and the administrative centralization he introduced, raised his kingdom to a height far above that of its European rivals. The power of France, in fact, was only counterbalanced by that of Spain, which had become a great state through the union of Castile and Aragon, and where the cool and wary Ferdinand of Aragon was building up a vast power by the marriage of his daughter and heiress to the Archduke Philip, son of the Emperor Maximilian. Too weak to meet France single-handed, Henry the Seventh saw in an alliance with Spain a security against his "hereditary enemy," and this alliance had been cemented by the marriage of his eldest son, Arthur, with Ferdinand's daughter, Catherine of Aragon. This match was broken by the death of the young bridegroom; but by the efforts of Spain a papal dispensation was procured which enabled Catherine to wed the brother of her late husband. Henry, however, anxious to preserve a balanced position between the battling powers of France and Spain, opposed the union; but Henry the Eighth had no sooner succeeded his father on the throne than the marriage was carried out. Throughout the first years of his reign,

amidst the tournaments and revelry which seemed to absorb his whole energies, Henry was in fact keenly watching the opening which the ambition of France began to afford for a renewal of the old struggle. Under the successors of Louis the Eleventh the efforts of the French monarchy had been directed to the conquest of Italy. The passage of the Alps by Charles the Eighth and the mastery which he won over Italy at a single blow lifted France at once above the states around her. Twice repulsed from Naples, she remained under the successor of Charles, Louis the Twelfth, mistress of Milan and of the bulk of Northern Italy; and the ruin of Venice in the league of Cambray crushed the last Italian state which could oppose her designs on the whole peninsula. A Holy League, as it was called from the accession to it of the pope, to drive France from the Milanese was formed by the efforts of Ferdinand, aided as he was by the kinship of the emperor, the support of Venice and Julius the Second, and the warlike temper of Henry the Eighth. "The barbarians," to use the phrase of Julius, "were chased beyond the Alps"; but Ferdinand's unscrupulous adroitness only used the English force, which had landed at Fontarabia with the view of attacking Guienne, to cover his own conquest of Navarre. The troops mutinied and sailed home; men scoffed at the English as useless for war. Henry's spirit, however, rose with the need. He landed in person in the north of France, and a sudden rout of the French cavalry in an engagement near Guinegate, which received from its bloodless character the name of the "battle of the Spurs," gave him the fortresses of Térouanne and Tournay. The young conqueror was eagerly pressing on to the recovery of his "heritage of France," when he found himself suddenly left alone by the desertion of Ferdinand and the dissolution of the league. Henry had indeed gained much. The might of France was broken. The papacy was restored to freedom. England had again figured as a great power in Europe. But the millions left by his father were exhausted, his subjects had been drained by repeated subsidies, and, furious as he was at the treachery of the Spanish ally, Henry was driven to conclude a peace.

To the hopes of the New Learning this sudden outbreak of

the spirit of war, this change of the monarch from whom they had looked for a "new order" into a vulgar conqueror, proved a bitter disappointment. Colet thundered from the pulpit of St. Paul's that "an unjust peace is better than the justest war," and protested that "when men out of hatred and ambition fight with and destroy one another, they fight under the banner, not of Christ, but of the devil." Erasmus quitted Cambridge with a bitter satire against the "madness" around him. "It is the people," he said, in words which must have startled his age,—"it is the people who build cities, while the madness of princes destroys them." The sovereigns of his time appeared to him like ravenous birds pouncing with beak and claw on the hard-won wealth and knowledge of mankind. "Kings who are scarcely men," he exclaimed in bitter irony, "are called 'divine'; they are 'invincible,' though they fly from every battle-field; 'serene,' though they turn the world upside down in a storm of war; 'illustrious,' though they grovel in ignorance of all that is noble; 'Catholic,' though they follow anything rather than Christ. Of all birds the Eagle alone has seemed to wise men the type of royalty, a bird neither beautiful nor musical nor good for food, but murderous, greedy, hateful to all, the curse of all, and with its great powers of doing harm only surpassed by its desire to do it." It was the first time in modern history that religion had formally dissociated itself from the ambition of princes and the horrors of war, or that the new spirit of criticism had ventured not only to question but to deny what had till then seemed the primary truths of political order. We shall soon see to what further length the new speculations were pushed by a greater thinker, but for the moment the indignation of the New Learning was diverted to more practical ends by the sudden peace. However he had disappointed its hopes, Henry still remained its friend. Through all the changes of his terrible career his home was a home of letters. His boy, Edward the Sixth, was a fair scholar in both the classical languages. His daughter Mary wrote good Latin letters. Elizabeth began every day with an hour's reading in the Greek Testament, the tragedies of Sophocles, or the orations of Demosthenes. The ladies of the court caught the royal fashion, and were

found poring over the pages of Plato. Widely as Henry's ministers differed from each other, they all agreed in sharing and fostering the culture around them. The panic of the scholar group therefore soon passed away. The election of Leo the Tenth, the fellow student of Linacre, the friend of Erasmus, seemed to give to the New Learning control of Christendom. The age of the turbulent, ambitious Julius was thought to be over, and the new pope declared for a universal peace. "Leo," wrote an English agent at his court, in words to which after history lent a strange meaning, "would favor literature and the arts, busy himself in building, and enter into no war save through actual compulsion." England, under the new ministry of Wolsey, withdrew from any active interference in the struggles of the Continent, and seemed as resolute as Leo himself for peace. Colet toiled on with his educational efforts; Erasmus forwarded to England the works which English liberality was enabling him to produce abroad. Warham extended to him as generous an aid as the protection he had afforded to Colet. His edition of the works of St. Jerome had been begun under Warham's encouragement during the great scholar's residence at Cambridge, and it appeared with a dedication to the archbishop on its title-page. That Erasmus could find protection in Warham's name for a work which boldly recalled Christendom to the path of sound Biblical criticism, that he could address him in words so outspoken as those of his preface, shows how fully the primate sympathized with the highest efforts of the New Learning. Nowhere had the spirit of inquiry so firmly set itself against the claims of authority. "Synods and decrees, and even councils," wrote Erasmus, "are by no means in my judgment the fittest modes of repressing error, unless truth depend simply on authority. But on the contrary, the more dogmas there are, the more fruitful is the ground in producing heresies. Never was the Christian faith purer or more undefiled than when the world was content with a single creed, and that the shortest creed we have." It is touching even now to listen to such an appeal of reason and of culture against the tide of dogmatism which was soon to flood Christendom with Augsburg Confessions and Creeds of Pope

Pius and Westminster Catechisms and Thirty-nine Articles. The principles which Erasmus urged in his "Jerome" were urged with far greater clearness and force in a work which laid the foundation of the future Reformation, the edition of the Greek Testament on which he had been engaged at Cambridge, and whose production was almost wholly due to the encouragement and assistance he received from English scholars. In itself the book was a bold defiance of theological tradition. It set aside the Latin version of the Vulgate, which had secured universal acceptance in the Church. Its method of interpretation was based, not on received dogmas, but on the literal meaning of the text. Its real end was the end at which Colet had aimed in his Oxford lectures. Erasmus desired to set Christ himself in the place of the Church, to recall men from the teachings of Christian theologians to the teachings of the Founder of Christianity. The whole value of the Gospels to him lay in the vividness with which they brought home to their readers the personal impression of Christ himself. "Were we to have seen him with our own eyes, we should not have so intimate a knowledge as they give us of Christ, speaking, healing, dying, rising again, as it were in our very presence." All the superstitions of medieval worship faded away in the light of this personal worship of Christ. "If the footprints of Christ are shown us in any place, we kneel down and adore them. Why do we not rather venerate the living and breathing picture of him in these books? We deck statues of wood and stone with gold and gems for the love of Christ. Yet they only profess to represent to us the outer form of his body, while these books present us with a living picture of his holy mind." In the same way the actual teaching of Christ was made to supersede the mysterious dogmas of the older ecclesiastical teaching. "As though Christ taught such subtleties," burst out Erasmus; "subtleties that can scarcely be understood even by a few theologians — or as though the strength of the Christian religion consisted in man's ignorance of it! It may be the safer course," he goes on, with characteristic irony, "to conceal the state mysteries of kings, but Christ desired his mysteries to be spread abroad as openly as was possible." In the diffusion, in the universal knowledge of

the teaching of Christ the foundation of a reformed Christianity had still, he urged, to be laid. With the tacit approval of the primate of a Church which from the time of Wyclif had held the translation and reading of the Bible in the common tongue to be heresy and a crime punishable with the fire, Erasmus boldly avowed his wish for a Bible open and intelligible to all. "I wish that even the weakest woman might read the Gospels and the Epistles of St. Paul. I wish that they were translated into all languages, so as to be read and understood not only by Scots and Irishmen, but even by Saracens and Turks. But the first step to their being read is to make them intelligible to the reader. I long for the day when the husbandman shall sing portions of them to himself as he follows the plow, when the weaver shall hum them to the tune of his shuttle, when the traveler shall while away with their stories the weariness of his journey." The New Testament of Erasmus became the topic of the day; the court, the universities, every household to which the New Learning had penetrated, read and discussed it. But bold as its language may have seemed, Warham not only expressed his approbation, but lent the work — as he wrote to its author — "to bishop after bishop." The most influential of his suffragans, Bishop Fox of Winchester, declared that the mere version was worth ten commentaries: one of the most learned, Fisher of Rochester, entertained Erasmus at his house.

Daring and full of promise as were these efforts of the New Learning in the direction of educational and religious reform, its political and social speculations took a far wider range in the "Utopia" of Thomas More. Even in the household of Cardinal Morton, where he had spent his childhood, More's precocious ability had raised the highest hopes. "Whoever may live to see it," the gray-haired statesman used to say, "this boy now waiting at table will turn out a marvelous man." We have seen the spell which his wonderful learning and the sweetness of his temper threw over Colet and Erasmus at Oxford, and, young as he was, More no sooner quitted the university than he was known throughout Europe as one of the foremost figures in the new movement. The keen, irregular face, the gray restless eye, the thin mobile lips, the

tumbled brown hair, the careless gait and dress, as they remain stamped on the canvas of Holbein, picture the inner soul of the man, his vivacity, his restless, all-devouring intellect, his keen and even reckless wit, the kindly, half-sad humor that drew its strange veil of laughter and tears over the deep, tender reverence of the soul within. In a higher, because in a sweeter and more lovable, form than Colet, More is the representative of the religious tendency of the New Learning in England. The young law student who laughed at the superstition and asceticism of the monks of his day wore a hair shirt next his skin, and schooled himself by penances for the cell he desired among the Carthusians. It was characteristic of the man that among all the gay, profligate scholars of the Italian Renascence he chose as the object of his admiration the disciple of Savonarola, Pico di Mirandola. Freethinker as the bigots who listened to his daring speculations termed him, his eye would brighten and his tongue falter as he spoke with friends of heaven and the after-life. When he took office, it was with the open stipulation "first to look to God, and after God to the king." But in his outer bearing there was nothing of the monk or recluse. The brightness and freedom of the New Learning seemed incarnate in the young scholar, with his gay talk, his winsomeness of manner, his reckless epigrams, his passionate love of music, his omnivorous reading, his paradoxical speculations, his gibes at monks, his schoolboy fervor of liberty. But events were soon to prove that beneath this sunny nature lay a stern inflexibility of conscientious resolve. The Florentine scholars who penned declamations against tyrants had covered with their flatteries the tyranny of the House of Medici. More no sooner entered Parliament than his ready argument and keen sense of justice led to the rejection of the royal demand for a heavy subsidy. "A beardless boy," said the courtiers, — and More was only twenty-six, — "has disappointed the king's purpose"; and during the rest of Henry the Seventh's reign the young lawyer found it prudent to withdraw from public life. But the withdrawal had little effect on his buoyant activity. He rose at once into repute at the bar. He wrote his "Life of Edward the Fifth," the first work in which what we may call modern English prose appears written with purity

and clearness of style and a freedom either from antiquated forms of expression or classical pedantry. His ascetic dreams were replaced by the affections of home. It is when we get a glimpse of him in his house at Chelsea that we understand the endearing epithets which Erasmus always lavishes upon More. The delight of the young husband was to train the girl he had chosen for his wife in his own taste for letters and for music. The reserve which the age exacted from parents was thrown to the winds in More's intercourse with his children. He loved teaching them, and lured them to their deeper studies by the coins and curiosities he had gathered in his cabinet. He was as fond of their pets and their games as his children themselves, and would take grave scholars and statesmen into the garden to see his girls' rabbit-hutches or to watch the gambols of their favorite monkey. "I have given you kisses enough," he wrote to his little ones in merry verse when far away on political business, "but stripes hardly ever." The accession of Henry the Eighth dragged him back into the political current. It was at his house that Erasmus penned the "Praise of Folly," and the work, in its Latin title, "Moriæ Encomium," embodied in playful fun his love of the extravagant humor of More. More "tried as hard to keep out of court," says his descendant, "as most men try to get into it." When the charm of his conversation gave so much pleasure to the young sovereign, "that he could not once in a month get leave to go home to his wife or children, whose company he much desired, . . . he began thereupon to dissemble his nature, and so, little by little, from his former mirth to dissemble himself." More shared to the full the disappointment of his friends at the sudden outbreak of Henry's warlike temper, but the peace again drew him to Henry's side, and he was soon in the king's confidence both as a counselor and as a diplomatist.

It was on one of his diplomatic missions that More describes himself as hearing news of the Kingdom of "Nowhere." "On a certain day when I had heard mass in Our Lady's Church, which is the fairest, the most gorgeous and curious church of building in all the city of Antwerp, and also most frequented of people, and service being over I was ready to go home to my lodgings, I chanced to espy my friend Peter

Gilles talking with a certain stranger, a man well stricken in age, with a black sun-burnt face, a large beard, and a cloke cast trimly about his shoulders, whom by his favour and apparell forthwith I judged to be a mariner." The sailor turned out to have been a companion of Amerigo Vespucci in those voyages to the New World "that be now in print and abroad in every man's hand," and on More's invitation he accompanied him to his house, and "there in my garden upon a bench covered with green turves we sate down, talking together" of the man's marvelous adventures, his desertion in America by Vespucci, his wanderings over the country under the equinoctial line, and at last of his stay in the Kingdom of "Nowhere." It was the story of "Nowhere," or Utopia, which More embodied in the wonderful book which reveals to us the heart of the New Learning. As yet the movement had been one of scholars and divines. Its plans of reform had been almost exclusively intellectual and religious. But in More the same free play of thought which had shaken off the old forms of education and faith turned to question the old forms of society and politics. From a world where fifteen hundred years of Christian teaching had produced social injustice, religious intolerance, and political tyranny, the humorist philosopher turned to a "Nowhere" in which the mere efforts of natural human virtue realized those ends of security, equality, brotherhood, and freedom for which the very institution of society seemed to have been framed. It is as he wanders through this dreamland of the new reason that More touches the great problems which were fast opening before the modern world, problems of labor, of crime, of conscience, of government. Merely to have seen and to have examined questions such as these would prove the keenness of his intellect, but its far-reaching originality is shown in the solutions which he proposes. Amidst much that is the pure play of an exuberant fancy, much that is mere recollection of the dreams of bygone dreamers, we find again and again the most important social and political discoveries of later times anticipated by the genius of Thomas More. In some points, such as his treatment of the question of Labor, he still remains far in advance of current opinion. The whole system of society around him

seemed to him "nothing but a conspiracy of the rich against the poor." Its economic legislation was simply the carrying out of such a conspiracy by process of law. "The rich are ever striving to pare away something further from the daily wages of the poor by private fraud and even by public law, so that the wrong already existing (for it is a wrong that those from whom the State derives most benefit should receive least reward) is made yet greater by means of the law of the State." "The rich devise every means by which they may in the first place secure to themselves what they have amassed by wrong, and then take to their own use and profit at the lowest possible price the work and labour of the poor. And so soon as the rich decide on adopting these devices in the name of the public, then they become law." The result was the wretched existence to which the labor class was doomed, "a life so wretched that even a beast's life seems enviable." No such cry of pity for the poor, of protest against the system of agrarian and manufacturing tyranny which found its expression in the statute-book, had been heard since the days of Piers Plowman. But from Christendom More turns with a smile to "Nowhere." In "Nowhere" the aim of legislation is to secure the welfare, social, industrial, intellectual, religious, of the community at large, and of the labor class as the true basis of a well-ordered commonwealth. The end of its labor laws was simply the welfare of the laborer. Goods were possessed indeed in common, but work was compulsory with all. The period of toil was shortened to the nine hours demanded by modern artisans, with a view to the intellectual improvement of the worker. "In the institution of the weal public this end is only and chiefly pretended and minded that what time may possibly be spared from the necessary occupations and affairs of the commonwealth, all that the citizens should withdraw from bodily service to the free liberty of the mind and garnishing of the same. For herein they conceive the felicity of this life to consist." A public system of education enabled the Utopians to avail themselves of their leisure. While in England half of the population could read no English, every child was well taught in "Nowhere." The physical aspects of society were cared for as attentively as its moral. The

houses of Utopia "in the beginning were very low and like homely cottages or poor shepherd huts made at all adventures of every rude piece of timber that came first to hand, with mud walls and ridged roofs thatched over with straw." The picture was really that of the common English town of More's day, the home of squalor and pestilence. In Utopia, however, they had at last come to realize the connection between public morality and the health which springs from light, air, comfort, and cleanliness. "The streets were twenty feet broad; the houses backed by spacious gardens, and curiously builded after a gorgeous and gallant sort, with their stories one after another. The outsides of the walls be made either of hard flint, or of plaster, or else of brick; and the inner sides be well strengthened by timber work. The roofs be plain and flat, covered over with plaster so tempered that no fire can hurt or perish it, and withstanding the violence of the weather better than any lead. They keep the wind out of their windows with glass, for it is there much used, and sometimes also with fine linen cloth dipped in oil or amber, and that for two commodities, for by this means more light cometh in and the wind is better kept out."

The same foresight which appears in More's treatment of the questions of Labor and the Public Health is yet more apparent in his treatment of the question of Crime. He was the first to suggest that punishment was less effective in suppressing it than prevention. "If you allow your people to be badly taught, their morals to be corrupted from childhood, and then when they are men punish them for the very crimes to which they have been trained in childhood — what is this but to make thieves, and then to punish them?" He was the first to plead for proportion between the punishment and the crime, and to point out the folly of the cruel penalties of his day. "Simple theft is not so great an offense as to be punished with death." If a thief and a murderer are sure of the same penalty, More shows that the law is simply tempting the thief to secure his theft by murder. "While we go about to make thieves afraid, we are really provoking them to kill good men." The end of all punishment he declares to be reformation, "nothing else but the destruction of vice and the saving of men." He advises "so using and

ordering criminals that they cannot choose but be good; and what harm soever they did before, the residue of their lives to make amends for the same." Above all, he urges that to be remedial punishment must be wrought out by labor and hope, so that "none is hopeless or in despair to recover again his former state of freedom by giving good tokens and likelihood of himself that he will ever after that live a true and honest man." It is not too much to say that in the great principles More lays down he anticipated every one of the improvements in our criminal system which have distinguished the last hundred years. His treatment of the religious question was even more in advance of his age. If the houses of Utopia were strangely in contrast with the halls of England, where the bones from every dinner lay rotting in the dirty straw which strewed the floor, where the smoke curled about the rafters, and the wind whistled through the unglazed windows; if its penal legislation had little likeness to the gallows which stood out so frequently against our English sky; the religion of "Nowhere" was in yet stronger conflict with the faith of Christendom. It rested simply on nature and reason. It held that God's design was the happiness of man, and that the ascetic rejection of human delights, save for the common good, was thanklessness to the Giver. Christianity, indeed, had already reached Utopia, but it had few priests; religion found its center rather in the family than in the congregation: and each household confessed its faults to its own natural head. A yet stranger characteristic was seen in the peaceable way in which it lived side by side with the older religions. More than a century before William of Orange, More discerned and proclaimed the great principle of religious toleration. In "Nowhere" it was lawful to every man to be of what religion he would. Even the disbelievers in a Divine Being or in the immortality of man, who by a single exception to its perfect religious indifference were excluded from public office, were excluded, not on the ground of their religious belief, but because their opinions were deemed to be degrading to mankind, and therefore to incapacitate those who held them from governing in a noble temper. But even these were subject to no punishment, because the people of Utopia were "persuaded that it is not in a man's power to believe

what he list." The religion which a man held he might propagate by argument, though not by violence or insult to the religion of others. But while each sect performed its rites in private, all assembled for public worship in a spacious temple, where the vast throng, clad in white, and grouped round a priest clothed in fair raiment wrought marvelously out of birds' plumage, joined in hymns and prayers so framed as to be acceptable to all. The importance of this public devotion lay in the evidence it afforded that liberty of conscience could be combined with religious unity.

Section V.—Wolsey, 1515–1531

"There are many things in the commonwealth of Nowhere, which I rather wish than hope to see adopted in our own." It was with these words of characteristic irony that More closed the first work which embodied the dreams of the New Learning. Destined as they were to fulfilment in the course of ages, its schemes of social, religious, and political reform broke helplessly against the temper of the time. At the very moment when More was pleading the cause of justice between rich and poor, social discontent was being fanned by exactions into a fiercer flame. While he aimed sarcasm after sarcasm at king-worship, despotism was being organized into a system. His advocacy of the two principles of religious toleration and Christian comprehension coincides almost to a year with the opening of the strife between the Reformation and the papacy.

"That Luther has a fine genius," laughed Leo the Tenth, when he heard that a German professor had nailed some Propositions denouncing the abuse of Indulgences, or of the papal power to remit certain penalties attached to the commission of sins, against the doors of a church at Wittenberg. But the "Quarrel of Friars," as the controversy was termed contemptuously at Rome, soon took larger proportions. If at the outset Luther flung himself "prostrate at the feet" of the papacy, and owned its voice as the voice of Christ, the sentence of Leo no sooner confirmed the doctrine of Indulgences than their opponent appealed to a future council of the Church. Two years later the rupture was complete. A papal bull formally condemned the errors of the Reformer.

The condemnation was met with defiance, and Luther publicly consigned the bull to the flames. A second condemnation expelled him from the bosom of the Church, and the ban of the Empire was soon added to that of the papacy. "Here stand I; I can none other," Luther replied to the young emperor, Charles the Fifth, as he pressed him to recant in the Diet of Worms; and from the hiding-place in the Thuringian Forest where he was sheltered by the Elector of Saxony he denounced not merely, as at first, the abuses of the papacy, but the papacy itself. The heresies of Wyclif were revived; the infallibility, the authority of the Roman see, the truth of its doctrines, the efficacy of its worship, were denied and scoffed at in vigorous pamphlets which issued from his retreat, and were dispersed throughout the world by the new printing-press. The old resentment of Germany against the oppression of Rome, the moral revolt in its more religious minds against the secularity and corruption of the Church, the disgust of the New Learning at the superstition which the papacy now formally protected, combined to secure for Luther a wide-spread popularity and the protection of the northern princes of the Empire. In England, however, his protest found as yet no echo. England and Rome were drawn to a close alliance by the difficulties of their political position. The young king himself, a trained theologian and proud of his theological knowledge, entered the lists against Luther with an "Assertion of the Seven Sacraments," for which he was rewarded by Leo with the title of "Defender of the Faith." The insolent abuse of the Reformer's answer called More and Fisher into the field. As yet the New Learning, though scared by Luther's intemperate language, had steadily backed him in his struggle. Erasmus pleaded for him with the emperor; Ulrich von Hutten attacked the friars in satires and invectives as violent as his own. But the temper of the Renascence was even more antagonistic to the temper of Luther than that of Rome itself. From the golden dream of a new age, wrought peaceably and purely by the slow progress of intelligence, the growth of letters, the development of human virtue, the Reformer of Wittenberg turned away with horror. He had little or no sympathy with the new culture. He despised reason as heartily as any papal

dogmatist could despise it. He hated the very thought of toleration or comprehension. He had been driven by a moral and intellectual compulsion to declare the Roman system a false one, but it was only to replace it by another system of doctrine just as elaborate, and claiming precisely the same infallibility. To degrade human nature was to attack the very base of the New Learning; but Erasmus no sooner advanced to its defense than Luther declared man to be utterly enslaved by original sin and incapable through any efforts of his own of discovering truth or of arriving at goodness. Such a doctrine not only annihilated the piety and wisdom of the classic past, from which the New Learning had drawn its larger views of life and of the world; it trampled in the dust reason itself, the very instrument by which More and Erasmus hoped to regenerate both knowledge and religion. To More especially, with his keener perception of its future effect, this sudden revival of a purely theological and dogmatic spirit, severing Christendom into warring camps, and annihilating all hopes of union and tolerance, was especially hateful. The temper which hitherto had seemed so "endearing, gentle, and happy" suddenly gave way. His reply to Luther's attack upon the king sank to the level of the work it answered. That of Fisher was calmer and more argumentative; but the divorce of the New Learning from the Reformation was complete.

Nor were the political hopes of the "Utopia" destined to be realized by the minister who at the close of Henry's early war with France mounted rapidly into power. Thomas Wolsey was the son of a wealthy townsman of Ipswich, whose ability had raised him into notice at the close of the preceding reign, and who had been taken by Bishop Fox into the service of the Crown. His extraordinary powers hardly perhaps required the songs, dances, and carouses with his indulgence in which he was taunted by his enemies, to aid him in winning the favor of the young sovereign. From the post of favorite he soon rose to that of minister. Henry's resentment at Ferdinand's perfidy enabled Wolsey to carry out a policy which reversed that of his predecessors. The war had freed England from the fear of French pressure. Wolsey was as resolute to free her from the dictation of Ferdinand,

and saw in a French alliance the best security for English independence. In 1514 a treaty was concluded with Lewis. The same friendship was continued to his successor Francis the First, whose march across the Alps for the reconquest of Lombardy was facilitated by Henry and Wolsey, in the hope that while the war lasted England would be free from all fear of attack, and that Francis himself might be brought to inevitable ruin. These hopes were defeated by his great victory at Marignano. But Francis in the moment of triumph saw himself confronted by a new rival. Master of Castile and Aragon, of Naples and the Netherlands, the new Spanish king, Charles the Fifth, rose into a check on the French monarchy such as the policy of Henry or Wolsey had never been able to construct before. The alliance of England was eagerly sought by both sides, and the administration of Wolsey, amid all its ceaseless diplomacy, for seven years kept England out of war. The peace, as we have seen, restored the hopes of the New Learning; it enabled Colet to reform education, Erasmus to undertake the regeneration of the Church, More to set on foot a new science of politics. But peace as Wolsey used it was fatal to English freedom. In the political hints which lie scattered over the "Utopia" More notes with bitter irony the advance of the new despotism. It was only in "Nowhere" that a sovereign was "removable on suspicion of a design to enslave his people." In England the work of slavery was being quietly wrought, hints the great lawyer, through the law. "There will never be wanting some pretense for deciding in the king's favor; as that equity is on his side, or the strict letter of the law, or some forced interpretation of it; or if none of these, that the royal prerogative ought with conscientious judges to outweigh all other considerations." We are startled at the precision with which More maps out the expedients by which the law courts were to lend themselves to the advance of tyranny till their crowning judgment in the case of ship-money. But behind these judicial expedients lay great principles of absolutism, which partly from the example of foreign monarchies, partly from the sense of social and political insecurity, and yet more from the isolated position of the Crown, were gradually winning their way in public opinion.

"These notions," he goes boldly on, "are fostered by the maxim that the king can do no wrong, however much he may wish to do it; that not only the property but the persons of his subjects are his own; and that a man has a right to no more than the king's goodness thinks fit not to take from him." In the hands of Wolsey these maxims were transformed into principles of State. The checks which had been imposed on the action of the sovereign by the presence of great prelates and nobles at his council were practically removed. All authority was concentrated in the hands of a single minister. Henry had munificently rewarded Wolsey's services to the Crown. He had been promoted to the see of Lincoln and thence to the archbishopric of York. Henry procured his elevation to the rank of cardinal, and raised him to the post of chancellor. The revenues of two sees whose tenants were foreigners fell into his hands; he held the bishopric of Winchester and the abbacy of St. Albans; he was in receipt of pensions from France and Spain, while his official emoluments were enormous. His pomp was almost royal. A train of prelates and nobles followed him wherever he moved; his household was composed of five hundred persons of noble birth, and its chief posts were held by knights and barons of the realm. He spent his vast wealth with princely ostentation. Two of his houses, Hampton Court and York House, the later Whitehall, were splendid enough to serve at his fall as royal palaces. His school at Ipswich was eclipsed by the glories of his foundation at Oxford, whose name of Cardinal College has been lost in its later title of Christ Church. Nor was this magnificence a mere show of power. The whole direction of home and foreign affairs rested with Wolsey alone; as chancellor he stood at the head of public justice; his elevation to the office of legate rendered him supreme in the Church. Enormous as was the mass of work which he undertook, it was thoroughly done: his administration of the royal treasury was economical; the number of his despatches is hardly less remarkable than the care bestowed upon each; even More, an avowed enemy, confesses that as chancellor he surpassed all men's expectations. The Court of Chancery, indeed, became so crowded through the character for expedition and

justice which it gained under his rule that subordinate courts had to be created for its relief. It was this concentration of all secular and ecclesiastical power in a single hand which accustomed England to the personal government which began with Henry the Eighth; and it was, above all, Wolsey's long tenure of the whole papal authority within the realm, and the consequent suspension of appeals to Rome, that led men to acquiesce at a later time in Henry's claim of religious supremacy. For proud as was Wolsey's bearing and high as were his natural powers he stood before England as the mere creature of the king. Greatness, wealth, authority, he held, and owned he held, simply at the royal will. In raising his low-born favorite to the head of Church and State Henry was gathering all religious as well as all civil authority, into his personal grasp. The nation which trembled before Wolsey learned to tremble before the king who could destroy Wolsey by a breath.

The rise of Charles of Austria gave a new turn to Wolsey's policy. Possessor of the Netherlands, of Franche Comté, of Spain, the death of his grandfather Maximilian added to his dominions the heritage of the House of Austria in Swabia and on the Danube, and opened the way for his election as emperor. France saw herself girt in on every side by a power greater than her own; and to Wolsey and his master the time seemed come for a bolder game. Disappointed in his hopes of obtaining the imperial crown on the death of Maximilian, Henry turned to the dream of "recovering his French inheritance," which he had never really abandoned, and which was carefully fed by his nephew Charles. Nor was Wolsey forgotten. If Henry coveted France, his minister coveted no less a prize than the papacy; and the young emperor was lavish of promises of support in any coming election. The result of these seductions was quickly seen. In May, 1520, Charles landed at Dover to visit Henry, and king and emperor rode alone to Canterbury. It was in vain that Francis strove to retain Henry's friendship by an interview near Guisnes, to which the profuse expenditure of both monarchs gave the name of the Field of the Cloth of Gold. A second interview between Charles and his uncle as he returned from the meeting with Francis ended in a secret

confederacy of the two sovereigns, and the promise of the emperor to marry Henry's one child, Mary Tudor. Her right to the throne was asserted by a deed which proved how utterly the baronage now lay at the mercy of the king. The Duke of Buckingham stood first in blood as in power among the English nobles; he was the descendant of Edward the Third's youngest son, and if Mary's succession were denied he stood heir to the throne. His hopes had been fanned by prophets and astrologers, and wild words told his purpose to seize the Crown on Henry's death in defiance of every opponent. But word and act had for two years been watched by the king; and in 1521 the duke was arrested, condemned as a traitor by his peers, and beheaded on Tower Hill. The French alliance came to an end, and at the outbreak of war between France and Spain a secret league was concluded at Calais between the pope, the emperor, and Henry. The first result of the new war policy at home was quickly seen. Wolsey's economy had done nothing more than tide the Crown through the past years of peace. But now that Henry had promised to raise forty thousand men for the coming campaign the ordinary resources of the treasury were utterly insufficient. With the instinct of despotism Wolsey shrank from reviving the tradition of the Parliament. Though Henry had thrice called together the Houses to supply the expenses of his earlier struggle with France, Wolsey governed during seven years of peace without once assembling them. War made a Parliament inevitable, but for a while the cardinal strove to delay its summons by a wide extension of the practise which Edward the Fourth had invented of raising money by forced loans or "Benevolences," to be repaid from the first subsidy of a coming Parliament. Large sums were assessed on every county. Twenty thousand pounds were exacted from London; and its wealthier citizens were summoned before the cardinal and required to give an account of the value of their estates. Commissioners were despatched into each shire for the purpose of assessment, and precepts were issued on their information, requiring in some cases supplies of soldiers, in others a tenth of a man's income, for the king's service. So poor, however, was the return that in the following year Wolsey was forced to summon Parliament and lay before it the unprece-

dented demand of a property tax of twenty per cent. The demand was made by the cardinal in person, but he was received with obstinate silence. It was in vain that Wolsey called on member after member to answer; and his appeal to More, who had been elected to the chair of the House of Commons, was met by the speaker's falling on his knees and representing his powerlessness to reply till he had received instructions from the House itself. The effort to overawe the Commons failed, and Wolsey no sooner withdrew than an angry debate began. He again returned to answer the objections which had been raised, and again the Commons foiled the minister's attempt to influence their deliberations by refusing to discuss the matter in his presence. The struggle continued for a fortnight; and though successful in procuring a subsidy, the court party were forced to content themselves with less than half Wolsey's demand. Convocation betrayed as independent a spirit; and when money was again needed two years later, the cardinal was driven once more to the system of Benevolences. A tenth was demanded from the laity, and a fourth from the clergy, in every county by the royal commissioners. There was "sore grudging and murmuring," Warham wrote to the court, "among the people." "If men should give their goods by a commission," said the Kentish squires, "then it would be worse than the taxes of France, and England should be bond, not free." The political instinct of the nation discerned as of old that in the question of self-taxation was involved that of the very existence of freedom. The clergy put themselves in the forefront of the resistance, and preached from every pulpit that the commission was contrary to the liberties of the realm, and that the king could take no man's goods but by process of law. So stirred was the nation that Wolsey bent to the storm, and offered to rely on the voluntary loans of each subject. But the statute of Richard the Third which declared all exaction of benevolences illegal was recalled to memory; the demand was evaded by London, and the commissioners were driven out of Kent. A revolt broke out in Suffolk; the men of Cambridge and Norwich threatened to rise. There was in fact a general strike of the employers. Cloth makers discharged their workers, farmers put away their servants. "They say the king asketh so much

that they be not able to do as they have done before this time." Such a peasant insurrection as was raging in Germany was only prevented by the unconditional withdrawal of the royal demand.

Wolsey's defeat saved English freedom for the moment; but the danger from which he shrank was not merely that of a conflict with the sense of liberty. The murmurs of the Kentish squires only swelled the ever-deepening voice of public discontent. If the condition of the land question in the end gave strength to the Crown by making it the security for public order, it became a terrible peril at every crisis of conflict between the monarchy and the landowners. The steady rise in the price of wool was giving a fresh impulse to the agrarian changes which had now been going on for over a hundred and fifty years, to the throwing together of the smaller holdings, and the introduction of sheep-farming on an enormous scale. The new wealth of the merchant classes helped on the change. They invested largely in land, and these "farming gentlemen and clerking knights," as Latimer bitterly styled them, were restrained by few traditions or associations in their eviction of the smaller tenants. The land indeed had been greatly underlet, and as its value rose the temptation to raise the customary rents became irresistible. "That which went heretofore for twenty or forty pounds a year," we learn from the same source, "now is let for fifty or a hundred." But it had been only by this low scale of rent that the small yeomanry class had been enabled to exist. "My father," says Latimer, "was a yeoman, and had no lands of his own; only he had a farm of three or four pounds by the year at the uttermost, and hereupon he tilled so much as kept half-a-dozen men. He had walk for a hundred sheep, and my mother milked thirty kine; he was able and did find the king a harness with himself and his horse while he came to the place that he should receive the king's wages. I can remember that I buckled his harness when he went to Blackheath Field. He kept me to school: he married my sisters with five pounds apiece, so that he brought them up in godliness and fear of God. He kept hospitality for his poor neighbors, and some alms he gave to the poor, and all this he did off the same farm where he that now hath it payeth sixteen pounds by year or more, and is not

able to do anything for his prince, for himself, nor for his children, or give a cup of drink to the poor." Increase of rent ended with such tenants in the relinquishment of their holdings, but the bitterness of ejection was increased by the iniquitous means which were often employed to bring it about. The farmers, if we believe More in 1515, were "got rid of either by fraud or force, or tired out with repeated wrongs into parting with their property." "In this way it comes to pass that these poor wretches, men, women, husbands, orphans, widows, parents with little children, households greater in number than in wealth (for arable farming requires many hands, while one shepherd and herdsman will suffice for a pasture farm), all these emigrate from their native fields without knowing where to go." The sale of their scanty household stuff drove them to wander homeless abroad, to be thrown into prison as vagabonds, to beg and to steal. Yet in the face of such a spectacle as this we still find the old complaint of scarcity of labor, and the old legal remedy for it in a fixed scale of wages. The social disorder, in fact, baffled the sagacity of English statesmen, and they could find no better remedy for it than laws against the further extension of sheep farms, and a terrible increase of public executions. Both were alike fruitless. Enclosures and evictions went on as before. "If you do not remedy the evils which produce thieves," More urged with bitter truth, "the rigorous execution of justice in punishing thieves will be vain." But even More could only suggest a remedy which, efficacious as it was subsequently to prove, had yet to wait a century for its realization. "Let the woolen manufacture be introduced, so that honest employment may be found for those whom want has made thieves or will make thieves ere long." The mass of social disorder grew steadily greater; while the break-up of the great military households of the nobles which was still going on, and the return of wounded and disabled soldiers from the wars, introduced a dangerous leaven of outrage and crime.

This public discontent, as well as the exhaustion of the treasury, added bitterness to the miserable result of the war. To France, indeed, the struggle had been disastrous, for the loss of the Milanese and the capture of Francis the First in the defeat of Pavia laid her at the feet of the emperor. But

Charles had no purpose of carrying out the pledges by which he had lured England into war. Wolsey had seen two partisans of the emperor successively raised to the papal chair. The schemes of winning anew "our inheritance of France" had ended in utter failure; England, as before, gained nothing from two useless campaigns, and it was plain that Charles meant it to win nothing. He concluded an armistice with his prisoner; he set aside all projects of a joint invasion; he broke his pledge to wed Mary Tudor, and married a princess of Portugal; he pressed for peace with France, which would give him Burgundy. It was time for Henry and his minister to change their course. They resolved to withdraw from all active part in the rivalry of the two powers, and a treaty was secretly concluded with France. But Henry remained on fair terms with the emperor, and abstained from any part in the fresh war which broke out on the refusal of the French monarch to fulfil the terms by which he had purchased his release. No longer spurred by the interest of great events, the king ceased to take a busy part in foreign politics, and gave himself to hunting and sport. Among the fairest and gayest ladies of his court stood Anne Boleyn. Her gaiety and wit soon won Henry's favor, and grants of honors to her father marked her influence. In 1524 a new color was given to this intimacy by a resolve on the king's part to break his marriage with the queen. The death of every child save Mary may have woke scruples as to the lawfulness of a marriage on which a curse seemed to rest; the need of a male heir may have deepened this impression. But, whatever were the grounds of his action, Henry from this moment pressed the Roman see to grant him a divorce. Clement's consent to his wish, however, would mean a break with the emperor, Catherine's nephew; and the pope was now at the emperor's mercy. While the English envoy was mooting the question of divorce, the surprise of Rome by an imperial force brought home to Clement his utter helplessness; the next year the pope was in fact a prisoner in the emperor's hands after the storm and sack of Rome. Meanwhile a secret suit which had been brought before Wolsey as legate was suddenly dropped; as Catherine denied the facts on which Henry rested his case, her appeal would have carried

the matter to the tribunal of the pope, and Clement's decision could hardly have been a favorable one. The difficulties of the divorce were indeed manifest. One of the most learned of the English bishops, Fisher of Rochester, declared openly against it. The English theologians, who were consulted on the validity of the papal dispensation which had allowed Henry's marriage to take place, referred the king to the pope for a decision of the question. The commercial classes shrank from a step which involved an irretrievable breach with the emperor, who was master of their great market in Flanders. Above all, the iniquity of the proposal jarred against the public conscience. But neither danger nor shame availed against the king's wilfulness and passion. A great party too had gathered to Anne's support. Her uncle the Duke of Norfolk, her father, now Lord Rochford, afterwards Earl of Wiltshire, pushed the divorce resolutely on; the brilliant group of young courtiers to which her brother belonged saw in her success their own elevation; and the Duke of Suffolk with the bulk of the nobles hoped through her means to bring about the ruin of the statesman before whom they trembled. It was needful for the cardinal to find some expedients to carry out the king's will; but his schemes one by one broke down before the difficulties of the papal court. Clement indeed, perplexed at once by his wish to gratify Henry, his own conscientious doubts as to the course proposed, and his terror of the emperor, whose power was now predominant in Italy, even blamed Wolsey for having hindered the king from judging the matter in his own realm, and marrying on the sentence of his own courts. Henry was resolute in demanding the express sanction of the pope to his divorce, and this Clement steadily evaded. He at last, however, consented to a legatine commission for the trial of the case in England. In this commission Cardinal Campeggio was joined with Wolsey. Months, however, passed in fruitless negotiations. The cardinals pressed on Catherine the expediency of her withdrawal to a religious house, while Henry pressed on the pope that of a settlement of the matter by his formal declaration against the validity of the marriage. At last in 1529 the two legates opened their court in the great hall of the Black Friars. Henry briefly announced his resolve

to live no longer in mortal sin. The queen offered an appeal to Clement, and on the refusal of the legates to admit it she flung herself at Henry's feet. "Sire," said Catherine, "I beseech you to pity me, a woman and a stranger, without an assured friend and without an indifferent counselor. I take God to witness that I have always been to you a true and loyal wife, that I have made it my constant duty to seek your pleasure, that I have loved all whom you loved, whether I have reason or not, whether they are friends to me or foes. I have been your wife for years, I have brought you many children. God knows that when I came to your bed I was a virgin, and I put it to your own conscience to say whether it was not so. If there be any offense which can be alleged against me I consent to depart with infamy; if not, then I pray you to do me justice." The piteous appeal was wasted on a king who was already entertaining Anne Boleyn with royal state in his own palace. The trial proceeded, and the court assembled to pronounce sentence. Henry's hopes were at their highest when they were suddenly dashed to the ground. At the opening of the proceedings Campeggio rose to declare the court adjourned. The adjournment was a mere evasion. The pressure of the Imperialists had at last forced Clement to summon the cause to his own tribunal at Rome, and the jurisdiction of the legates was at an end.

"Now see I," cried the Duke of Suffolk as he dashed his hand on the table, "that the old saw is true, that there was never legate or cardinal that did good to England!" "Of all men living," Wolsey boldly retorted, "you, my Lord Duke, have the least reason to dispraise cardinals, for if I, a poor cardinal, had not been, you would not now have had a head on your shoulders wherewith to make such a brag in disrepute of us." But both the cardinal and his enemies knew that the minister's doom was sealed. Through the twenty years of his reign Henry had known nothing of opposition to his will. His imperious temper had chafed at the weary negotiations, the subterfuges and perfidies of the pope. His wrath fell at once on Wolsey, who had dissuaded him from acting at the first independently, from conducting the cause in his own courts and acting on the sentence of his own judges; who had counseled him to seek a divorce from Rome and

promised him success in his suit. From the close of the legatine court he would see him no more. If Wolsey still remained minister for a while, it was because the thread of the complex foreign negotiations could not be roughly broken. Here too, however, failure awaited him as he saw himself deceived and outwitted by the conclusion of peace between France and the emperor in a new treaty at Cambray. Not only was his French policy no longer possible, but a reconciliation with Charles was absolutely needful, and such a reconciliation could only be brought about by Wolsey's fall. He was at once prosecuted for receiving bulls from Rome in violation of the Statute of Præmunire. A few days later he was deprived of the seals. Wolsey was prostrated by the blow. He offered to give up everything that he possessed if the king would but cease from his displeasure. "His face," wrote the French ambassador, "is dwindled to half its natural size. In truth his misery is such that his enemies, Englishmen as they are, cannot help pitying him." Office and wealth were flung desperately at the king's feet, and for the moment Henry seemed contented with his disgrace. A thousand boats full of Londoners covered the Thames to see the cardinal's barge pass to the Tower, but he was permitted to retire to Esher. Pardon was granted him on a surrender of his vast possessions to the Crown, and he was permitted to withdraw to his diocese of York, the one dignity he had been suffered to retain. But hardly a year had passed before the jealousy of his political rivals was roused by the king's regrets, and on the eve of his installation feast he was arrested on a charge of high treason, and conducted by the lieutenant of the Tower towards London. Already broken by his enormous labors, by internal disease, and the sense of his fall, Wolsey accepted the arrest as a sentence of death. An attack of dysentery forced him to rest at the abbey of Leicester, and as he reached the gate he said feebly to the brethren who met him, "I am come to lay my bones among you." On his death-bed his thoughts still clung to the prince whom he had served. "He is a prince," said the dying man to the lieutenant of the Tower, "of a most royal courage: sooner than miss any part of his will he will endanger one half of his kingdom: and I do assure you I have often kneeled before him, sometimes for three

hours together, to persuade him from his appetite, and could not prevail. And, Master Knyghton, had I but served God as diligently as I have served the king, He would not have given me over in my gray hairs. But this is my due reward for my pains and study, not regarding my service to God, but only my duty to my prince." No words could paint with so terrible a truthfulness the spirit of the new despotism which Wolsey had done more than any of those who went before him to build up. All sense of loyalty to England, to its freedom, to its institutions, had utterly passed away. The one duty which the statesman owned was a duty to his "prince," a prince whose personal will and appetite was overriding the highest interests of the State, trampling under foot the wisest counsels, and crushing with the blind ingratitude of Fate the servants who opposed him. But even Wolsey, while he recoiled from the monstrous form which had revealed itself, could hardly have dreamed of the work of destruction which the royal courage, and yet more royal appetite, of his master was to accomplish in the years to come.

Section VI. — Thomas Cromwell, 1530–1540

The ten years which follow the fall of Wolsey are among the most momentous in our history. The new Monarchy at last realized its power, and the work for which Wolsey had paved the way was carried out with a terrible thoroughness. The one great institution which could still offer resistance to the royal will was struck down. The Church became a mere instrument of the central despotism. The people learned their helplessness in rebellions easily suppressed and avenged with ruthless severity. A reign of terror, organized with consummate and merciless skill, held England panic-stricken at Henry's feet. The noblest heads rolled on the block. Virtue and learning could not save Thomas More: royal descent could not save Lady Salisbury. The putting away of one queen, the execution of another, taught England that nothing was too high for Henry's "courage" or too sacred for his "appetite." Parliament assembled only to sanction acts of unscrupulous tyranny, or to build up by its own statutes the great fabric of absolute rule. All the constitutional safe-

guards of English freedom were swept away. Arbitrary taxation, arbitrary legislation, arbitrary imprisonment, were powers claimed without dispute and unsparingly exercised by the Crown.

The history of this great revolution, for it is nothing less, is the history of a single man. In the whole line of English statesmen there is no one of whom we would willingly know so much, no one of whom we really know so little, as Thomas Cromwell. When he meets us in Henry's service he had already passed middle life; and during his earlier years it is hardly possible to do more than disentangle a few fragmentary facts from the mass of fable which gathered round them. His youth was one of roving adventure. Whether he was the son of a poor blacksmith at Putney or no, he could hardly have been more than a boy when he was engaged in the service of the Marchioness of Dorset. He must still have been young when he took part as a common soldier in the wars of Italy, a "ruffian," as he owned afterwards to Cranmer, in the most unscrupulous school the world contained. But it was a school in which he learned lessons even more dangerous than those of the camp. He not only mastered the Italian language but drank in the manners and tone of the Italy around him, the Italy of the Borgias and the Medici. It was with Italian versatility that he turned from the camp to the counting-house; he was certainly engaged as a commercial agent to one of the Venetian merchants; tradition finds him as a clerk at Antwerp; and in 1512 history at last encounters him as a thriving wool merchant at Middleburg in Zealand. Returning to England, Cromwell continued to amass wealth by adding the trade of scrivener, something between that of a banker and attorney, to his other occupations, as well as by advancing money to the poorer nobles; and on the outbreak of the second war with France we find him a busy and influential member of the Commons in Parliament. Five years later the aim of his ambition was declared by his entrance into Wolsey's service. The cardinal needed a man of business for the suppression of some smaller monasteries which he had undertaken, and for the transfer of their revenues to his foundations at Oxford and Ipswich. The task was an unpopular one, and it was carried out with a rough indifference to the feelings it

aroused which involved Cromwell in the hate which was gathering round his master. But his wonderful self-reliance and sense of power only broke upon the world at Wolsey's fall. Of the hundreds of dependents who waited on the cardinal's nod, Cromwell was the only one who clung to him faithfully at the last. In the lonely hours of his disgrace at Esher Wolsey "made his moan unto Master Cromwell, who comforted him the best he could, and desired my lord to give him leave to go to London, where he would make or mar, which was always his common saying." He showed his consummate craft in a scheme by which Wolsey was persuaded to buy off the hostility of the courtiers by confirming the grants which had been made to them from his revenues, while Cromwell acquired importance as go-between in these transactions. It was by Cromwell's efforts in Parliament that a bill disqualifying Wolsey from all after employment was defeated, and it was by him that the negotiations were conducted which permitted the fallen minister to retire to York. A general esteem seems to have rewarded this rare instance of fidelity to a ruined patron. "For his honest behavior in his master's cause he was esteemed the most faithfullest servant, and was of all men greatly commended." But Henry's protection rested on other grounds. The ride to London had ended in a private interview with the king, in which Cromwell boldly advised him to cut the knot of the divorce by the simple exercise of his own supremacy. The advice struck the keynote of the later policy by which the daring counselor was to change the whole face of Church and State; but Henry still clung to the hopes held out by his new ministers, and shrank perhaps as yet from the bare absolutism to which Cromwell called him. The advice at any rate was concealed, and though high in the king's favor, his new servant waited patiently the progress of events.

For success in procuring the divorce, the Duke of Norfolk, who had come to the front on Wolsey's fall, relied not only on the alliance and aid of the emperor, but on the support which the project was expected to receive from Parliament. The reassembling of the two Houses marked the close of the system of Wolsey. Instead of looking on Parliament as a danger the Monarchy now felt itself strong enough to use it as a

tool; and Henry justly counted on warm support in his strife with Rome. Not less significant was the attitude of the men of the New Learning. To them, as to his mere political adversaries, the cardinal's fall opened a prospect of better things. The dream of More in accepting the office of chancellor, if we may judge it from the acts of his brief ministry, seems to have been that of carrying out the religious reformation which had been demanded by Colet and Erasmus, while checking the spirit of revolt against the unity of the Church. His severities against the Protestants, exaggerated as they have been by polemic rancor, remain the one stain on a memory that knows no other. But it was only by a rigid severance of the cause of reform from what seemed to him the cause of revolution that More could hope for a successful issue to the projects which the council laid before Parliament. The Petition of the Commons sounded like an echo of Colet's famous address to the Convocation. It attributed the growth of heresy not more to "frantic and seditious books published in the English tongue contrary to the very true Catholic and Christian faith" than to "the extreme and uncharitable behavior of divers ordinaries." It remonstrated against the legislation of the clergy in Convocation without the king's assent or that of his subjects, the oppressive procedure of the Church courts, the abuses of ecclesiastical patronage, and the excessive number of holydays. Henry referred the Petition to the bishops, but they could devise no means of redress, and the ministry persisted in pushing through the Houses their bills for ecclesiastical reform. The questions of Convocation and the bishops' courts were adjourned for further consideration, but the fees of the courts were curtailed, the clergy restricted from lay employments, pluralities restrained, and residence enforced. In spite of a dogged opposition from the bishops the bills received the assent of the House of Lords, "to the great rejoicing of lay people, and the great displeasure of spiritual persons." The importance of the new measures lay really in the action of Parliament. They were an explicit announcement that Church reform was now to be undertaken, not by the clergy, but by the people at large. On the other hand it was clear that it would be carried out, not in a spirit of hostility, but of loyalty

to the Church. The Commons forced from Bishop Fisher an apology for words which were taken as a doubt thrown on their orthodoxy. Henry forbade the circulation of Tyndale's translation of the Bible as executed in a Protestant spirit, while he promised a more correct version. But the domestic aims of the New Learning were foiled by the failure of the ministry in its negotiations for the divorce. The severance of the French alliance, and the accession of the party to power which clung to alliance with the emperor, failed to detach Charles from his aunt's cause. The ministers accepted the suggestion of a Cambridge scholar, Thomas Cranmer, that the universities of Europe should be called on for their judgment; but the appeal to the learned opinion of Christendom ended in utter defeat. In France the profuse bribery of the English agents would have failed with the University of Paris but for the interference of Francis himself. As shameless an exercise of Henry's own authority was required to wring an approval of his cause from Oxford and Cambridge. In Germany the very Protestants, in the fervor of their moral revival, were dead against the king. So far as could be seen from Cranmer's test every learned man in Christendom but for bribery and threats would have condemned Henry's cause.

It was at the moment when every expedient had been exhausted by Norfolk and his fellow ministers that Cromwell came again to the front. Despair of other means drove Henry nearer and nearer to the bold plan from which he had shrunk at Wolsey's fall. Cromwell was again ready with his suggestion that the king should disavow the papal jurisdiction, declare himself head of the Church within his realm, and obtain a divorce from his own ecclesiastical courts. But with Cromwell the divorce was but the prelude to a series of changes he was bent upon accomplishing. In all the checkered life of the new minister what had left its deepest stamp on him was Italy. Not only in the rapidity and ruthlessness of his designs, but in their larger scope, their clearer purpose, and their admirable combination, the Italian statecraft entered with Cromwell into English politics. He is in fact the first English minister in whom we can trace through the whole period of his rule the steady working out of a

great and definite aim. His purpose was to raise the king to absolute authority on the ruins of every rival power within the realm. It was not that Cromwell was a mere slave of tyranny. Whether we may trust the tale that carries him in his youth to Florence or no, his statesmanship was closely modeled on the ideal of the Florentine thinker whose book was constantly in his hand. Even as a servant of Wolsey he startled the future cardinal, Reginald Pole, by bidding him take for his manual in politics the "Prince" of Machiavelli. Machiavelli hoped to find in Cæsar Borgia or in the later Lorenzo de Medici a tyrant who after crushing all rival tyrannies might unite and regenerate Italy; and it is possible to see in the policy of Cromwell the aim of securing enlightenment and order for England by the concentration of all authority in the Crown. The last check on royal absolutism which had survived the Wars of the Roses lay in the wealth, the independent synods and jurisdiction, and the religious claims of the Church. To reduce the great ecclesiastical body to a mere department of the State in which all authority should flow from the sovereign alone, and in which his will should be the only law, his decision the only test of truth, was a change hardly to be wrought without a struggle; and it was the opportunity for such a struggle that Cromwell saw in the divorce. His first blow showed how unscrupulously the struggle was to be waged. A year had passed since Wolsey had been convicted of a breach of the Statute of Præmunire. The pedantry of the judges declared the whole nation to have been formally involved in the same charge by its acceptance of his authority. The legal absurdity was now redressed by a general pardon, but from this pardon the clergy found themselves omitted. They were told that forgiveness could be bought at no less a price than the payment of a fine amounting to a million of our present money, and the acknowledgment of the king as "the chief protector, the only and supreme lord, the head of the Church and clergy of England." To the first demand they at once submitted; against the second they struggled hard, but their appeals to Henry and to Cromwell met only with demands for instant obedience. A compromise was at last arrived at by the insertion of a qualifying phrase "so far as the law of

Christ will allow"; and with this addition the words were again submitted by Warham to the Convocation. There was a general silence. "Whoever is silent seems to consent," said the archbishop. "Then are we all silent," replied a voice from among the crowd.

There is no ground for thinking that the "headship of the Church" which Henry claimed in this submission was more than a warning addressed to the independent spirit of the clergy, or that it bore as yet the meaning which was afterwards attached to it. It certainly implied no independence of Rome; but it told the pope plainly that in any strife that might come the clergy were in the king's hand. The warning was backed by the demand for the settlement of the question addressed to Clement on the part of the Lords and some of the Commons. "The cause of his Majesty," the peers were made to say, "is the cause of each of ourselves." If Clement would not confirm what was described as the judgment of the universities in favor of the divorce "our condition will nôt be wholly irremediable. Extreme remedies are ever harsh of application; but he that is sick will by all means be rid of his distemper." The banishment of Catherine from the king's palace gave emphasis to the demand. The failure of a second embassy to the pope left Cromwell free to take more decisive steps in the course on which he had entered. As his policy developed itself More withdrew from the post of chancellor; but the revolution from which he shrank was an inevitable one. From the reign of the Edwards men had been occupied with the problem of reconciling the spiritual and temporal relations of the realm. Parliament from the first became the organ of the national jealousy, whether of papal jurisdiction without the kingdom or of the separate jurisdiction of the clergy within it. The movement, long arrested by religious reaction and civil war, was reviving under the new sense of national greatness and national unity, when it was suddenly stimulated by the question of the divorce, and by the submission of English interests to a foreign court. With such a spur it moved forward quickly. The time had come when England was to claim for herself the fulness of power, ecclesiastical as well as temporal, within her bounds; and, in the concentration of all authority within the hands of the sover-

eign which was the political characteristic of the time, to claim this power for the nation was to claim it for the king. The import of the headship of the Church was brought fully out in one of the propositions laid before the Convocation of 1532. "The King's Majesty," runs this memorable clause, "hath as well the care of the souls of his subjects as their bodies; and may by the law of God by his Parliament make laws touching and concerning as well the one as the other." Under strong pressure Convocation was brought to pray that the power of independent legislation till now exercised by the Church should come to an end. Rome was dealt with in the same unsparing fashion. The Parliament forbade by statute any further appeals to the papal court; and on a petition from the clergy in Convocation the Houses granted power to the king to suspend the payments of first-fruits, or the year's revenue which each bishop paid to Rome on his election to a see. All judicial, all financial, connection with the papacy was broken by these two measures. Cromwell fell back on Wolsey's policy. The hope of aid from Charles was abandoned, and by a new league with France he sought to bring pressure on the papal court. But the pressure was as unsuccessful as before. Clement threatened the king with excommunication if he did not restore Catherine to her place as queen and abstain from all intercourse with Anne Boleyn till the case was tried. Henry still refused to submit to the judgment of any court outside his realm; and the pope dared not consent to a trial within it. Henry at last closed the long debate by a secret union with Anne Boleyn. Warham was dead, and Cranmer, an active partisan of the divorce, was named to the see of Canterbury; proceedings were at once commenced in his court; and the marriage of Catherine was formally declared invalid by the new primate at Dunstable. A week later Cranmer set on the brow of Anne Boleyn the crown which she had so long coveted.

As yet the real character of Cromwell's ecclesiastical policy had been disguised by its connection with the divorce. But though formal negotiations continued between England and Rome, until Clement's final decision in Catherine's favor, they had no longer any influence on the series of measures which in their rapid succession changed the whole character

of the English Church. The acknowledgment of Henry's title as its protector and head was soon found by the clergy to have been more than a form of words. It was the first step in a policy by which the Church was to be laid prostrate at the foot of the throne. Parliament had shown its accordance with the royal will in the strife with Rome. Step by step the ground had been cleared for the great statute by which the new character of the Church was defined. The Act of Supremacy ordered that the king "shall be taken, accepted, and reputed the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England, and shall have and enjoy annexed and united to the imperial crown of this realm as well the title and state thereof as all the honors, jurisdictions, authorities, immunities, profits and commodities to the said dignity belonging, with full power to visit, repress, redress, reform, and amend all such errors, heresies, abuses, contempts, and enormities, which by any manner of spiritual authority or jurisdiction might or may lawfully be reformed." Authority in all matters ecclesiastical, as well as civil, was vested solely in the Crown. The "courts spiritual" became as thoroughly the king's courts as the temporal courts at Westminster. But the full import of the Act of Supremacy was only seen in the following year, when Henry formally took the title of "on earth supreme head of the Church of England," and some months later Cromwell was raised to the post of vicar-general or vicegerent of the king in all matters ecclesiastical. His title, like his office, recalled the system of Wolsey; but the fact that these powers were now united in the hands not of a priest but of a layman, showed the new drift of the royal policy. And this policy Cromwell's position enabled him to carry out with a terrible thoroughness. One great step towards its realization had already been taken in the statute which annihilated the free legislative powers of the Convocations of the clergy. Another followed in an act which under the pretext of restoring the free election of bishops turned every prelate into a nominee of the king. Their election by the chapters of their cathedral churches had long become formal, and their appointment had since the time of the Edwards been practically made by the papacy on the nomination of the Crown. The privilege of free election was now

with bitter irony restored to the chapters, but they were compelled on pain of præmunire to choose the candidate recommended by the king. This strange expedient has lasted till the present time; but its character has wholly changed with the development of constitutional rule. The nomination of bishops has ever since the accession of the Georges passed from the king in person to the minister who represents the will of the people. Practically therefore an English prelate, alone among all the prelates of the world, is now raised to his episcopal throne by the same popular election which raised Ambrose to his episcopal chair at Milan. But at the moment Cromwell's measure reduced the English bishops to absolute dependence on the Crown. Their dependence would have been complete had his policy been thoroughly carried out and the royal power of deposition put in force as well as that of appointment. As it was Henry could warn the Archbishop of Dublin that if he persevered in his "proud folly, we be able to remove you again and to put another man of more virtue and honesty in your place." Even Elizabeth in a burst of ill humor threatened to "unfrock" the Bishop of Ely. By the more ardent partisans of the Reformation this dependence of the bishops on the Crown was fully recognized. On the death of Henry the Eighth Cranmer took out a new commission from Edward for the exercise of his office. Latimer, when the royal policy clashed with his belief, felt bound to resign the see of Worcester. That the power of deposition was at a later time quietly abandoned was due not so much to any deference for the religious instincts of the nation as to the fact that the steady servility of the bishops rendered its exercise unnecessary.

Master of Convocation, absolute master of the bishops, Henry had become master of the monastic orders through the right of visitation over them which had been transferred by the Act of Supremacy from the papacy to the Crown. The religious houses had drawn on themselves at once the hatred of the New Learning and of the Monarchy. In the early days of the revival of letters popes and bishops had joined with princes and scholars in welcoming the diffusion of culture and the hopes of religious reform. But though an abbot or a prior here or there might be found among the

supporters of the movement, the monastic orders as a whole repelled it with unswerving obstinacy. The quarrel only became more bitter as years went on. The keen sarcasms of Erasmus, the insolent buffoonery of Hutten, were lavished on the "lovers of darkness" and of the cloister. In England Colet and More echoed with greater reserve the scorn and invective of their friends. As an outlet for religious enthusiasm, indeed, monasticism was practically dead. The friar, now that his fervor of devotion and his intellectual energy had passed away, had sunk into a mere beggar. The monks had become mere landowners. Most of their houses were anxious only to enlarge their revenues and to diminish the number of those who shared them. In the general carelessness which prevailed as to the spiritual objects of their trust, in the wasteful management of their estates, in the indolence and self-indulgence which for the most part characterized them, the monastic houses simply exhibited the faults of all corporate bodies which have outlived the work which they were created to perform. But they were no more unpopular than such corporate bodies generally are. The Lollard cry for their suppression had died away. In the north, where some of the greatest abbeys were situated, the monks were on good terms with the country gentry, and their houses served as schools for their children; nor is there any sign of a different feeling elsewhere. But in Cromwell's system there was no room for either the virtues or the vices of monasticism, for its indolence and superstition, or for its independence of the throne. Two royal commissioners therefore were despatched on a general visitation of the religious houses, and their reports formed a "Black Book" which was laid before Parliament on their return. It was acknowledged that about a third of the religious houses, including the bulk of the larger abbeys, were fairly and decently conducted. The rest were charged with drunkenness, with simony, and with the foulest and most revolting crimes. The character of the visitors, the sweeping nature of their report, and the long debate which followed on its reception, leaves little doubt that the charges were grossly exaggerated. But the want of any effective discipline which had resulted from their exemption from any but papal supervision told fatally against

monastic morality even in abbeys like St. Albans: and the acknowledgment of Warham, as well as the partial measures of suppression begun by Wolsey, go far to prove that in the smaller houses at least indolence had passed into crime. But in spite of the cry of "Down with them" which broke from the Commons as the report was read, the country was still far from desiring the utter downfall of the monastic system. A long and bitter debate was followed by a compromise which suppressed all houses whose incomes fell below £200 a year, and granted their revenues to the Crown; but the great abbeys were still preserved intact.

The secular clergy alone remained; and injunction after injunction from the vicar-general taught rector and vicar that they must learn to regard themselves as mere mouthpieces of the royal will. With the instinct of genius Cromwell discerned the part which the pulpit, as the one means which then existed of speaking to the people at large, was to play in the religious and political struggle that was at hand; and he resolved to turn it to the profit of the Monarchy. The restriction of the right of preaching to priests who received licenses from the Crown silenced every voice of opposition. Even to those who received these licenses theological controversy was forbidden; and a high-handed process of "tuning the pulpits" by directions as to the subject and tenor of each special discourse made the preachers at every crisis mere means of diffusing the royal will. As a first step in this process every bishop, abbot, and parish priest was required to preach against the usurpation of the papacy, and to proclaim the king as the supreme head of the Church on earth. The very topics of the sermon were carefully prescribed; the bishops were held responsible for the compliance of the clergy with these orders, and the sheriffs were held responsible for the compliance of the bishops. It was only when all possibility of resistance was at an end, when the Church was gagged and its pulpits turned into mere echoes of Henry's will, that Cromwell ventured on his last and crowning change, that of claiming for the Crown the right of dictating at its pleasure the form of faith and doctrine to be held and taught throughout the land. A purified Catholicism such as Erasmus and Colet had dreamed of was now to be the re-

ligion of England. But the dream of the New Learning was to be wrought out, not by the progress of education and piety, but by the brute force of the Monarchy. The Articles of Religion, which Convocation received and adopted without venturing on a protest, were drawn up by the hand of Henry himself. The Bible and the three Creeds were laid down as the sole grounds of faith. The Sacraments were reduced from seven to three, only Penance being allowed to rank on an equality with Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The doctrines of Transubstantiation and Confession were maintained, as they were also in the Lutheran churches. The spirit of Erasmus was seen in the acknowledgment of Justification by Faith, a doctrine for which the friends of the New Learning, such as Pole and Contarini, were struggling at Rome itself, in the condemnation of purgatory, of pardons, and of masses for the dead, in the admission of prayers for the dead, and in the retention of the ceremonies of the Church without material change. Enormous as was the doctrinal revolution, not a murmur broke the assent of Convocation, and the Articles were sent by the vicar-general into every county to be obeyed at men's peril. The policy of reform was carried steadily out by a series of royal injunctions which followed. Pilgrimages were suppressed; the excessive number of holydays diminished; the worship of images and relics discouraged in words which seem almost copied from the protest of Erasmus. His burning appeal for a translation of the Bible, which weavers might repeat at their shuttle and plowmen sing at their plow, received at last a reply. At the outset of the ministry of Norfolk and More the king had promised an English version of the Scriptures, while prohibiting the circulation of Tyndale's Lutheran translation. The work, however, lagged in the hands of the bishops; and as a preliminary measure the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments were now rendered into English, and ordered to be taught by every schoolmaster and father of a family to his children and pupils. But the bishops' version still hung on hand; till in despair of its appearance a friend of Archbishop Cranmer, Miles Coverdale, was employed to correct and revise the translation of Tyndale; and the Bible which he edited was published in 1538 under the avowed patronage of Henry himself. The

story of the royal supremacy was graven on its very title-page. The new foundation of religious truth was to be regarded throughout England as a gift, not from the Church, but from the king. It is Henry on his throne who gives the sacred volume to Cranmer, ere Cranmer and Cromwell can distribute it to the throng of priests and laymen below.

The debate on the suppression of the monasteries was the first instance of opposition with which Cromwell had met, and for some time longer it was to remain the only one. While the great revolution which struck down the Church was in progress, England looked silently on. In all the earlier ecclesiastical changes, in the contest over the papal jurisdiction and papal exactions, in the reform of the Church courts, even in the curtailment of the legislative independence of the clergy, the nation as a whole had gone with the king. But from the enslavement of the clergy, from the gagging of the pulpits, from the suppression of the monasteries, the bulk of the nation stood aloof. It is only through the stray depositions of royal spies that we catch a glimpse of the wrath and hate which lay seething under this silence of a whole people. For the silence was a silence of terror. Before Cromwell's rise and after his fall from power the reign of Henry the Eighth witnessed no more than the common tyranny and bloodshed of the time. But the years of Cromwell's administration form the one period in our history which deserves the name which men have given to the rule of Robespierre. It was the English Terror. It was by terror that Cromwell mastered the king. Cranmer could plead for him at a later time with Henry as "one whose surety was only by your Majesty, who loved your Majesty, as I ever thought, no less than God." But the attitude of Cromwell towards the king was something more than that of absolute dependence and unquestioning devotion. He was "so vigilant to preserve your Majesty from all treasons," adds the primate, "that few could be so secretly conceived but he detected the same from the beginning." Henry, like every Tudor, was fearless of open danger, but tremulously sensitive to the slightest breath of hidden disloyalty. It was on this inner dread that Cromwell based the fabric of his power. He was hardly secretary before a host of spies were scattered broadcast over the land.

Secret denunciations poured into the open ear of the minister. The air was thick with tales of plots and conspiracies, and with the detection and suppression of each Cromwell tightened his hold on the king. And as it was by terror that he mastered the king, so it was by terror that he mastered the people. Men felt in England, to use the figure by which Erasmus paints the time, "as if a scorpion lay sleeping under every stone." The confessional had no secrets for Cromwell. Men's talk with their closest friends found its way to his ear. "Words idly spoken," the murmurs of a petulant abbot, the ravings of a moon-struck nun, were, as the nobles cried passionately at his fall, "tortured into treason." The only chance of safety lay in silence. "Friends who used to write and send me presents," Erasmus tells us, "now send neither letters nor gifts, nor receive any from any one, and this through fear." But even the refuge of silence was closed by a law more infamous than any that has ever blotted the statute-book of England. Not only was thought made treason, but men were forced to reveal their thoughts on pain of their very silence being punished with the penalties of treason. All trust in the older bulwarks of liberty was destroyed by a policy as daring as it was unscrupulous. The noblest institutions were degraded into instruments of terror. Though Wolsey had strained the law to the utmost, he had made no open attack on the freedom of justice. If he had shrunk from assembling Parliaments, it was from his sense that they were the bulwarks of liberty. Under Cromwell the coercion of juries and the management of judges rendered the courts mere mouthpieces of the royal will: and where even this shadow of justice proved an obstacle to bloodshed, Parliament was brought into play to pass bill after bill of attainder. "He shall be judged by the bloody laws he has himself made," was the cry of the council at the moment of his fall, and by a singular retribution the crowning injustice which he sought to introduce even into the practise of attainder, the condemnation of a man without hearing his defense, was only practised on himself. But ruthless as was the Terror of Cromwell, it was of a nobler type than the Terror of France. He never struck uselessly or capriciously, or stooped to the meaner victims of the guillotine. His blows were

effective just because he chose his victims from among the noblest and the best. If he struck at the Church, it was through the Carthusians, the holiest and the most renowned of English churchmen. If he struck at the baronage, it was through the Courtenays and the Poles, in whose veins flowed the blood of kings. If he struck at the New Learning, it was through the murder of Sir Thomas More. But no personal vindictiveness mingled with his crime. In temper, indeed, so far as we can judge from the few stories which lingered among his friends, he was a generous, kindly hearted man, with pleasant and winning manners, which atoned for a certain awkwardness of person, and with a constancy of friendship which won him a host of devoted adherents. But no touch either of love or hate swayed him from his course. The student of Machiavelli had not studied the "Prince" in vain. He had reduced bloodshed to a system. Fragments of his papers still show us with what a business-like brevity he ticked off human lives among the casual "remembrances" of the day. "Item, the Abbot of Reading to be sent down to be tried and executed at Reading." "Item, to know the king's pleasure touching Master More." "Item, when Master Fisher shall go to his execution, and the other." It is indeed this utter absence of all passion, of all personal feeling, that makes the figure of Cromwell the most terrible in our history. He has an absolute faith in the end he is pursuing, and he simply hews his way to it as a woodman hews his way through the forest, ax in hand.

The choice of his first victim showed the ruthless precision with which Cromwell was to strike. In the general opinion of Europe the foremost Englishman of his time was Sir Thomas More. As the policy of the divorce ended in an open rupture with Rome he had withdrawn silently from the ministry, but his silent disapproval was more telling than the opposition of obscurer foes. To Cromwell there must have been something specially galling in More's attitude of reserve. The religious reforms of the New Learning were being rapidly carried out, but it was plain that the man who represented the very life of the New Learning believed that the sacrifice of liberty and justice was too dear a price to pay even for religious reform. More, indeed, looked on the divorce

and remarriage as without religious warrant, though his faith in the power of Parliament to regulate the succession made him regard the children of Anne Boleyn as the legal heirs of the Crown. The Act of Succession, however, required an oath to be taken by all persons, which not only recognized the succession, but contained an acknowledgment that the marriage with Catherine was against Scripture and invalid from the beginning. Henry had long known More's belief on this point; and the summons to take this oath was simply a summons to death. More was at his house at Chelsea when the summons called him to Lambeth, to the house where he had bandied fun with Warham and Erasmus or bent over the easel of Holbein. For a moment there may have been some passing impulse to yield. But it was soon over. "I thank the Lord," More said with a sudden start as the boat dropped silently down the river from his garden steps in the early morning, "I thank the Lord that the field is won." Cranmer and his fellow commissioners tendered to him the new oath of allegiance; but, as they expected, it was refused. They bade him walk in the garden that he might reconsider his reply. The day was hot and More seated himself in a window from which he could look down into the crowded court. Even in the presence of death, the quick sympathy of his nature could enjoy the humor and life of the throng below. "I saw," he said afterwards, "Master Latimer very merry in the court, for he laughed and took one or twain by the neck so handsomely that if they had been women I should have weened that he waxed wanton." The crowd below was chiefly of priests, rectors and vicars, pressing to take the oath that More found harder than death. He bore them no grudge for it. When he heard the voice of one who was known to have boggled hard at the oath a little while before calling loudly and ostentatiously for drink, he only noted him with his peculiar humor. "He drank," More supposed, "either from dryness or from gladness," or "to show quod ille notus erat Pontifici." He was called in again at last, but only repeated his refusal. It was in vain that Cranmer plied him with distinctions which perplexed even the subtle wit of the ex-chancellor; he remained unshaken and passed to the Tower. He was followed there by Bishop Fisher of Rochester, charged

with countenancing treason by listening to the prophecies of a fanatic called the "Nun of Kent." For the moment even Cromwell shrank from their blood. They remained prisoners while a new and more terrible engine was devised to crush out the silent but wide-spread opposition to the religious changes. By a statute passed at the close of 1534 a new treason was created in the denial of the king's titles; and in the opening of 1535 Henry assumed, as we have seen, the title of "on earth supreme head of the Church of England." In the general relaxation of the religious life the charity and devotion of the brethren of the Charterhouse had won the reverence even of those who condemned monasticism. After a stubborn resistance they had acknowledged the royal supremacy, and taken the oath of submission prescribed by the act. But by an infamous construction of the statute which made the denial of the supremacy treason, the refusal of satisfactory answers to official questions as to a conscientious belief in it was held to be equivalent to open denial. The aim of the new measure was well known, and the brethren prepared to die. In the agony of waiting enthusiasm brought its imaginative consolations; "when the Host was lifted up there came as it were a whisper of air which breathed upon our faces as we knelt; and there came a sweet soft sound of music." They had not long, however, to wait. Their refusal to answer was the signal for their doom. Three of the brethren went to the gallows; the rest were flung into Newgate, chained to posts in a noisome dungeon where, "tied and not able to stir," they were left to perish of jail-fever and starvation. In a fortnight five were dead and the rest at the point of death, "almost despatched," Cromwell's envoy wrote to him, "by the hand of God, of which, considering their behavior, I am not sorry." The interval of imprisonment had failed to break the resolution of More, and the new statute sufficed to bring him to the block. With Fisher he was convicted of denying the king's title as only supreme head of the Church. The old bishop approached the block with a book of the New Testament in his hand. He opened it at a venture ere he knelt, and read, "This is life eternal to know Thee, the only true God." Fisher's death was soon followed by that of More. On the eve of the fatal blow he moved his

beard carefully from the block. "Pity that should be cut," he was heard to mutter with a touch of the old sad irony, "that has never committed treason."

But it required, as Cromwell well knew, heavier blows even than these to break the stubborn resistance of Englishmen to his projects of change, and he seized his opportunity in the revolt of the north. In the north the monks had been popular; and the outrages with which the dissolution of the monasteries was accompanied gave point to the mutinous feeling that prevailed through the country. The nobles, too, were writhing beneath the rule of one whom they looked upon as a low-born upstart. "The world will never mend," Lord Hussey was heard to say, "till we fight for it." Agrarian discontent and the love of the old religion united in a revolt which broke out in Lincolnshire. The rising was hardly suppressed when Yorkshire was in arms. From every parish the farmers marched with the parish priest at their head upon York, and the surrender of the city determined the waverers. In a few days Skipton Castle, where the Earl of Cumberland held out with a handful of men, was the only spot north of the Humber which remained true to the king. Durham rose at the call of Lords Latimer and Westmoreland. Though the Earl of Northumberland feigned sickness, the Percies joined the revolt. Lord Dacre, the chief of the Yorkshire nobles, surrendered Pomfret, and was at once acknowledged as their chief by the insurgents. The whole nobility of the north were now in arms, and thirty thousand "tall men and well horsed" moved on the Don, demanding the reversal of the royal policy, a reunion with Rome, the restoration of Catherine's daughter, Mary, to her rights as heiress of the Crown, redress for the wrongs done to the Church, and above all the driving away of base-born counselors, in other words the fall of Cromwell. Though their advance was checked by negotiation, the organization of the revolt went steadily on throughout the winter, and a Parliament of the north gathered at Pomfret, and formally adopted the demands of the insurgents. Only six thousand men under Norfolk barred their way southward, and the Midland counties were known to be disaffected. Cromwell, however, remained undaunted by the peril. He suffered Norfolk to negotiate; and allowed

Henry under pressure from his council to promise pardon and a free Parliament at York, a pledge which Norfolk and Dacre alike construed into an acceptance of the demands made by the insurgents. Their leaders at once flung aside the badge of the Five Wounds which they had worn, with a cry "We will wear no badge but that of our Lord the King," and nobles and farmers dispersed to their homes in triumph. But the towns of the north were no sooner garrisoned and Norfolk's army in the heart of Yorkshire than the veil was flung aside. A few isolated outbreaks gave a pretext for the withdrawal of every concession. The arrest of the leaders of the "Pilgrimage of Grace," as the insurrection was styled, was followed by ruthless severities. The country was covered with gibbets. Whole districts were given up to military execution. But it was on the leaders of the rising that Cromwell's hand fell heaviest. He seized his opportunity for dealing at the northern nobles a fatal blow. "Cromwell," one of the chief among them broke fiercely out as he stood at the council-board, "it is thou that art the very special and chief cause of all this rebellion and wickedness, and dost daily travail to bring us to our ends and strike off our heads. I trust that ere thou die, though thou wouldst procure all the noblest heads within the realm to be stricken off, yet there shall one head remain that shall strike off thy head." But the warning was unheeded. Lord Darcy, who stood first among the nobles of Yorkshire, and Lord Hussey, who stood first among the nobles of Lincolnshire, went alike to the block. The Abbot of Barlings, who had ridden into Lincoln with his canons in full armor, swung with his brother abbots of Whalley, Woburn, and Sawley from the gallows. The abbots of Fountains and of Jervaulx were hanged at Tyburn side by side with the representative of the great line of Percy. Lady Bulmer was burnt at the stake. Sir Robert Constable was hanged in chains before the gate of Hull. The blow to the north had not long been struck when Cromwell turned to deal with the west. The opposition to his system gathered above all round two houses who represented what yet lingered of Yorkist tradition, the Courtenays and the Poles. Margaret, the Countess of Salisbury, a daughter of the Duke of Clarence by the heiress of the Earl of Warwick, was at once

representative of the Nevilles and a niece of Edward the Fourth. Her third son, Reginald Pole, after refusing the highest offers from Henry as the price of his approval of the divorce, had taken refuge in Rome, where he had bitterly attacked the king in a book on "The Unity of the Church." "There may be found ways enough in Italy," Cromwell wrote to him in significant words, "to rid a treacherous subject. When Justice can take no place by process of law at home, sometimes she may be enforced to take new means abroad." But he had left hostages in Henry's hands. "Pity that the folly of one witless fool should be the ruin of so great a family. Let him follow ambition as fast as he can, those that little have offended (saving that he is of their kin), were it not for the great mercy and benignity of the prince, should and might feel what it is to have a traitor as their kinsman." Pole answered by pressing the emperor to execute a bull of excommunication and deposition which was now launched by the papacy. Cromwell was quick with his reply. Courtenay, the Marquis of Exeter, was a kinsman of the Poles, and like them of royal blood, a grandson through his mother of Edward the Fourth. He was known to have bitterly denounced the "knaves that ruled about the king"; and his threats to "give them some day a buffet" were formidable in the mouth of one whose influence in the western counties was supreme. He was at once arrested with Lord Montacute, Pole's elder brother, on a charge of treason, and both were beheaded on Tower Hill, while the Countess of Salisbury was attainted and sent to the Tower.

Never indeed had Cromwell shown such greatness as in his last struggle against Fate. "Beknaved" by the king whose confidence in him waned as he discerned the full meaning of the religious changes, met too by a growing opposition in the council as his favor declined, the temper of the man remained indomitable as ever. He stood absolutely alone. Wolsey, hated as he had been by the nobles, had been supported by the Church; but churchmen hated Cromwell with an even fiercer hate than the nobles themselves. His only friends were the Protestants, and their friendship was more fatal than the hatred of his foes. But he showed no signs of fear or of halting in the course he had entered on. His activity was as

boundless as ever. Like Wolsey he had concentrated in his hands the whole administration of the State; he was at once foreign minister and home minister and vicar-general of the Church, the creator of a new fleet, the organizer of armies, the president of the terrible Star Chamber. But his Italian indifference to the mere show of power contrasted strongly with the pomp of the cardinal. His personal habits were simple and unostentatious. If he clutched at money, it was to feed the vast army of spies whom he maintained at his own expense, and whose work he surveyed with a sleepless vigilance. More than fifty volumes still remain of the gigantic mass of his correspondence. Thousands of letters from "poor beadsmen," from outraged wives and wronged laborers and persecuted heretics, flowed in to the all-powerful minister whose system of personal government had turned him into the universal court of appeal. So long as Henry supported him, however reluctantly, he was more than a match for his foes. He was strong enough to expel his chief opponent, Bishop Gardiner of Winchester, from the royal council. He met the hostility of the nobles with a threat which marked his power. "If the lords would handle him so, he would give them such a breakfast as never was made in England, and that the proudest of them should know." His single will forced on a scheme of foreign policy whose aim was to bind England to the cause of the Reformation while it bound Henry helplessly to his minister. The daring boast which his enemies laid afterwards to his charge, whether uttered or not, is but the expression of his system. "In brief time he would bring things to such a pass that the king with all his power should not be able to hinder him." His plans rested, like the plan which proved fatal to Wolsey, on a fresh marriage of his master. The short-lived royalty of Anne Boleyn had ended in charges of adultery and treason, and in her death in May, 1536. Her rival and successor in Henry's affections, Jane Seymour, died next year in childbirth; and Cromwell replaced her with a German consort, Anne of Cleves, a sister-in-law of the Lutheran elector of Saxony. He dared even to resist Henry's caprice, when the king revolted on their first interview at the coarse features and unwieldy form of his new bride. For the moment Cromwell had brought matters "to

such a pass" that it was impossible to recoil from the marriage. The marriage of Anne of Cleves, however, was but the first step in a policy which, had it been carried out as he designed it, would have anticipated the triumphs of Richelieu. Charles and the House of Austria could alone bring about a Catholic reaction strong enough to arrest and roll back the Reformation; and Cromwell was no sooner united with the princes of North Germany than he sought to league them with France for the overthrow of the emperor. Had he succeeded, the whole face of Europe would have been changed, Southern Germany would have been secured for Protestantism, and the Thirty Years' war averted. He failed as men fail who stand ahead of their age. The German princes shrank from a contest with the emperor, France from a struggle which would be fatal to Catholicism; and Henry, left alone to bear the resentment of the House of Austria and chained to a wife he loathed, turned savagely on Cromwell. The nobles sprang on him with a fierceness that told of their long-hoarded hate. Taunts and execrations burst from the lords at the council-table, as the Duke of Norfolk, who had been charged with the minister's arrest, tore the ensign of the Garter from his neck. At the charge of treason Cromwell flung his cap on the ground with a passionate cry of despair. "This then," he exclaimed, "is my guerdon for the services I have done! On your consciences, I ask you, am I a traitor?" Then with a sudden sense that all was over he bade his foes "make quick work, and not leave me to languish in prison." Quick work was made, and a yet louder burst of popular applause than that which hailed the attainder of Cromwell hailed his execution.

CHAPTER VII

THE REFORMATION

Section I. — The Protestants, 1540–1553

AT Cromwell's death the success of his policy was complete. The Monarchy had reached the height of its power. The old liberties of England lay prostrate at the feet of the king. The lords were cowed and spiritless; the House of Commons was filled with the creatures of the court and degraded into an engine of tyranny. Royal proclamations were taking the place of parliamentary legislation; benevolences were encroaching more and more on the right of parliamentary taxation. Justice was prostituted in the ordinary courts to the royal will, while the boundless and arbitrary powers of the royal council were gradually superseding the slower processes of the Common Law. The new religious changes had thrown an almost sacred character over the "majesty" of the king. Henry was the head of the Church. From the primate to the meanest deacon every minister of it derived from him his sole right to exercise spiritual powers. The voice of its preachers was the echo of his will. He alone could define orthodoxy or declare heresy. The forms of its worship and belief were changed and rechanged at the royal caprice. Half of its wealth went to swell the royal treasury, and the other half lay at the king's mercy. It was this unprecedented concentration of all power in the hands of a single man that overawed the imagination of Henry's subjects. He was regarded as something high above the laws which govern common men. The voices of statesmen and of priests extolled his wisdom and power as more than human. The Parliament itself rose and bowed to the vacant throne when his name was mentioned. An absolute devotion to his person replaced the old loyalty to the law. When the primate of the English Church described

the chief merit of Cromwell, it was by asserting that he loved the king "no less than he loved God."

It was indeed Cromwell, as we have seen, who more than any man had reared this fabric of king-worship; but he had hardly reared it before it began to give way. The very success of his measures indeed brought about the ruin of his policy. One of the most striking features of his system had been his revival of Parliaments. The great assembly which the Monarchy, from Edward the Fourth to Wolsey, had dreaded and silenced, was called to the front again by Cromwell, and turned into the most formidable weapon of despotism. He saw nothing to fear in a House of Lords whose nobles cowered helpless before the might of the Crown, and whose spiritual members his policy was degrading into mere tools of the royal will. Nor could he find anything to dread in a House of Commons which was crowded with members directly or indirectly nominated by the royal council. With a Parliament such as this Cromwell might well trust to make the nation itself through its very representatives an accomplice in the work of absolutism. It was by parliamentary statutes that the Church was prostrated at the feet of the Monarchy. It was by bills of attainder that great nobles were brought to the block. It was under constitutional forms that freedom was gagged with new treasons and oaths and questionings. But the success of such a system depended wholly on the absolute servility of Parliament to the will of the Crown, and Cromwell's own action made the continuance of such a servility impossible. The part which the Houses were to play in after-years shows the importance of clinging to the forms of constitutional freedom, even when their life is all but lost. In the inevitable reaction against tyranny they furnish centers for the reviving energies of the people, while the returning tide of liberty is enabled through their preservation to flow quietly and naturally along its traditional channels. On one occasion during Cromwell's own rule a "great debate" on the suppression of the lesser monasteries showed that elements of resistance still survived; and these elements developed rapidly as the power of the Crown declined under the minority of Edward and the unpopularity of Mary. To this revival of a spirit of independence the

spoliation of the Church largely contributed. Partly from necessity, partly from a desire to build up a faction interested in the maintenance of their ecclesiastical policy, Cromwell and the king squandered the vast mass of wealth which flowed into the treasury with reckless prodigality. Something like a fifth of the actual land in the kingdom was in this way transferred from the holding of the Church to that of nobles and gentry. Not only were the older houses enriched, but a new aristocracy was erected from among the dependents of the court. The Russells and the Cavendishes are familiar instances of families which rose from obscurity through the enormous grants of Church land made to Henry's courtiers. The old baronage was hardly crushed before a new aristocracy took its place. "Those families within or without the bounds of the peerage," observes Mr. Hallam, "who are now deemed the most considerable, will be found, with no great number of exceptions, to have first become conspicuous under the Tudor line of kings, and, if we could trace the title of their estates, to have acquired no small portion of them mediately or immediately from monastic or other ecclesiastical foundations." The leading part which the new peers took in the events which followed Henry's death gave a fresh strength and vigor to the whole order. But the smaller gentry shared in the general enrichment of the landed proprietors, and the new energy of the Lords was soon followed by a display of fresh political independence among the Commons themselves.

But it was above all in the new energy which the religious spirit of the people at large drew from the ecclesiastical changes which he had brought about, that the policy of Cromwell was fatal to the Monarchy. Lollardry, as a great social and popular movement, had ceased to exist, and little remained of the directly religious impulse given by Wyclif beyond a vague restlessness and discontent with the system of the Church. But weak and fitful as was the life of Lollardry, the prosecutions whose records lie scattered over the bishops' registers failed wholly to kill it. We see groups meeting here and there to read "in a great book of heresy all one night certain chapters of the Evangelists in English," while transcripts of Wyclif's tracts passed from hand to hand. The

smoldering embers needed but a breath to fan them into flame, and the breath came from William Tyndale. He had passed from Oxford to Cambridge to feel the full impulse given by the appearance there of the New Testament of Erasmus. From that moment one thought was at his heart. "If God spare my life," he said to a learned controversialist, "ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plow shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost." But he was a man of forty before his dream became fact. Drawn from his retirement in Gloucestershire by the news of Luther's protest at Wittenberg, he found shelter for a time in London, and then at Hamburg, before he found his way to the little town which had suddenly become the sacred city of the Reformation. Students of all nations were flocking there with an enthusiasm which resembled that of the crusades. "As they came in sight of the town," a contemporary tells us, "they returned thanks to God with clasped hands, for from Wittenberg, as heretofore from Jerusalem, the light of evangelical truth had spread to the utmost parts of the earth." In 1525 his version of the New Testament was completed. Driven from Köln, he had to fly with his sheets to Worms, from whence six thousand copies of the New Testament were sent to English shores. But it was not as a mere translation of the Bible that Tyndale's work reached England. It came as a part of the Lutheran movement; it bore the Lutheran stamp in its version of ecclesiastical words; it came too in company with Luther's bitter invectives and reprints of the tracts of Wyclif. It was denounced as heretical, and a pile of books was burned before Wolsey in St. Paul's Churchyard. Bibles and pamphlets however were smuggled over to England and circulated among the poorer and trading classes through the agency of an association of "Christian Brethren," consisting principally of London tradesmen and citizens, but whose missionaries spread over the country at large. They found their way at once to the universities, where the intellectual impulse given by the New Learning was quickening religious speculation. Cambridge had already won a name for heresy, and the Cambridge scholars whom Wolsey introduced into Cardinal College, which he was founding, spread the contagion through Oxford. A group of "Brethren" which was formed

in Cardinal College for the secret reading and discussion of the Epistles soon included the more intelligent and learned scholars of the university. It was in vain that Clark, the center of this group, strove to dissuade fresh members from joining it by warnings of the impending dangers. "I fell down on my knees at his feet," says one of them, Anthony Dalaber, "and with tears and sighs besought him that for the tender mercy of God he should not refuse me, saying that I trusted verily that He who had begun this on me would not forsake me, but would give me grace to continue therein to the end. When he heard me say so he came to me, took me in his arms, and kissed me, saying, 'The Lord God Almighty grant you so to do, and from henceforth ever take me for your father, and I will take you for my son in Christ.'" The excitement which followed on this rapid diffusion of Tyndale's works forced Wolsey to more vigorous action; many of the Oxford Brethren were thrown into prison and their books seized. But in spite of the panic of the Protestants, some of whom fled over sea, little severity was really exercised; and Wolsey remained steadily indifferent to all but political matters.

Henry's chief anxiety, indeed, was lest in the outburst against heresy the interest of the New Learning should suffer harm. This was remarkably shown in the protection he extended to one who was destined to eclipse even the fame of Colet as a popular preacher. Hugh Latimer was the son of a Leicestershire yeoman, whose armor the boy had buckled on ere he set out to meet the Cornish insurgents at Blackheath Field. He has himself described the soldierly training of his youth. "My father was delighted to teach me to shoot with the bow. He taught me how to draw, how to lay my body to the bow, not to draw with strength of arm as other nations do, but with the strength of the body." At fourteen he was at Cambridge, flinging himself into the New Learning, which was winning its way there with a zeal which at last told on his physical strength. The ardor of his mental efforts left its mark on him in ailments and enfeebled health, from which, vigorous as he was, his frame never wholly freed itself. But he was destined to be known, not as a scholar, but as a preacher. The sturdy good sense of the man shook off the

pedantry of the schools as well as the subtlety of the theologian in his addresses from the pulpit. He had little turn for speculation, and in the religious changes of the day we find him constantly lagging behind his brother reformers. But he had the moral earnestness of a Jewish prophet, and his denunciations of wrong had a prophetic directness and fire. "Have pity on your soul," he cried to Henry, "and think that the day is even at hand when you shall give an account of your office, and of the blood that hath been shed by your sword." His irony was yet more telling than his invective. "I would ask you a strange question," he said once at Paul's Cross to a ring of bishops; "who is the most diligent prelate in all England, that passeth all the rest in doing of his office? I will tell you. It is the Devil! of all the pack of them that have cure, the Devil shall go for my money; for he ordereth his business. Therefore, you unpreaching prelates, learn of the Devil to be diligent in your office. If you will not learn of God, for shame learn of the Devil." But he was far from limiting himself to invective. His homely humor breaks in with story and apologue; his earnestness is always tempered with good sense; his plain and simple style quickens with a shrewd mother-wit. He talks to his hearers as a man talks to his friends, telling stories such as we have given of his own life at home, or chatting about the changes and chances of the day with a transparent simplicity and truth that raises even his chat into grandeur. His theme is always the actual world about him, and in his homely lessons of loyalty, of industry, of pity for the poor, he touches upon almost every subject, from the plow to the throne. No such preaching had been heard in England before his day, and with the growth of his fame grew the danger of persecution. There were moments when, bold as he was, Latimer's heart failed him. "If I had not trust that God will help me," he wrote once, "I think the ocean sea would have divided my lord of London and me by this day." A citation for heresy at last brought the danger home. "I intend," he wrote with his peculiar medley of humor and pathos, "to make merry with my parishioners this Christmas, for all the sorrow, lest perchance I may never return to them again." But he was saved throughout by the steady protection of the court.

Wolsey upheld him against the threats of the Bishop of Ely; Henry made him his own chaplain; and the king's interposition at this critical moment forced Latimer's judges to content themselves with a few vague words of submission.

Henry's quarrel with Rome saved the Protestants from the keener persecution which troubled them after Wolsey's fall. The divorce, the renunciation of the papacy, the degradation of the clergy, the suppression of the monasteries, the religious changes, fell like a series of heavy blows upon the priesthood. From persecutors they suddenly sank into men trembling for their very lives. Those whom they had threatened were placed at their head. Cranmer became primate; Shaxton, a favorer of the new changes, was raised to the see of Salisbury; Barlow, a yet more extreme partisan, to that of St. David's; Hilsey to that of Rochester; Goodrich to that of Ely; Fox to that of Hereford. Latimer himself became Bishop of Worcester, and in a vehement address to the clergy in Convocation taunted them with their greed and superstition in the past, and with their inactivity when the king and his Parliament were laboring for the revival of religion. The aim of Cromwell, as we have seen, was simply that of the New Learning; he desired religious reform rather than revolution, a simplification rather than a change of doctrine, the purification of worship rather than the introduction of a new ritual. But it was impossible to strike blow after blow at the Church without leaning instinctively to the party who sympathized with the German reformation, and were longing for a more radical change at home. Few as these "Lutherans" or "Protestants" still were in numbers, their new hopes made them a formidable force; and in the school of persecution they had learned a violence which delighted in outrages on the faith which had so long trampled them underfoot. At the very outset of Cromwell's changes four Suffolk youths broke into the church at Dovercourt, tore down a wonder-working crucifix, and burned it in the fields. The suppression of the lesser monasteries was the signal for a new outburst of ribald insult to the old religion. The roughness, insolence, and extortion of the commissioners sent to effect it drove the whole monastic body to despair. Their servants rode along the road with copes for doublets and tunicles for saddlecloths

and scattered panic among the larger houses which were left. Some sold their jewels and relics to provide for the evil day they saw approaching. Some begged of their own will for dissolution. It was worse when fresh ordinances of the vicar-general ordered the removal of objects of superstitious veneration. The removal, bitter enough to those whose religion twined itself around the image or the relic which was taken away, was yet more embittered by the insults with which it was accompanied. The miraculous rood at Boxley, which bowed its head and stirred its eyes, was paraded from market to market and exhibited as a juggle before the court. Images of the Virgin were stripped of their costly vestments and sent to be publicly burnt at London. Latimer forwarded to the the capital the figure of Our Lady, which he had thrust out of his cathedral church at Worcester, with rough words of scorn: "She with her old sister of Walsingham, her younger sister of Ipswich, and their two other sisters of Doncaster and Penrice, would make a jolly muster at Smithfield." Fresh orders were given to fling all relics from their reliquaries, and to level every shrine with the ground. The bones of St. Thomas of Canterbury were torn from the stately shrine which had been the glory of his metropolitan church, and his name was erased from the service-books as that of a traitor. The introduction of the English Bible into churches gave a new opening for the zeal of the Protestants. In spite of royal injunctions that it should be read decently and without comment, the young zealots of the party prided themselves on shouting it out to a circle of excited hearers during the service of Mass, and accompanied their reading with violent expositions. Protestant maidens took the new English primer to church with them, and studied it ostentatiously during matins. Insult passed into open violence when the bishops' courts were invaded and broken up by Protestant mobs; and law and public opinion were outraged at once when priests who favored the new doctrines began openly to bring home wives to their vicarages. A fiery outburst of popular discussion compensated for the silence of the pulpits. The new Scriptures, in Henry's bitter words of complaint, were "disputed, rhymed, sung, and jangled in every tavern and alehouse." The articles which dictated the belief of the English

Church roused a furious controversy. Above all, the Sacrament of the Mass, the center of the Catholic system of faith and worship, and which still remained sacred to the bulk of Englishmen, was attacked with a scurrility and profaneness which passes belief. The doctrine of Transubstantiation, which was as yet recognized by law, was held up to scorn in ballads and mystery plays. In one church a Protestant lawyer raised a dog in his hands when the priest elevated the Host. The most sacred words of the old worship, the words of consecration, "hoc est corpus," were travestied into a nickname for jugglery as "hocus-pocus." It was by this attack on the Mass, even more than by the other outrages, that the temper both of Henry and the nation was stirred to a deep resentment; and the first signs of reaction were seen in the Act of the Six Articles, which was passed by the Parliament with general assent. On the doctrine of Transubstantiation, which was reasserted by the first of these, there was no difference of feeling or belief between the men of the New Learning and the older Catholics. But the road to a further instalment of even moderate reform seemed closed by the five other articles, which sanctioned communion in one kind, the celibacy of the clergy, monastic vows, private masses, and auricular confession. A more terrible feature of the reaction was the revival of persecution. Burning was denounced as the penalty for the denial of Transubstantiation; on a second offense it became the penalty for an infraction of the other five doctrines. A refusal to confess or to attend Mass was made felony. It was in vain that Cranmer, with the five bishops who partially sympathized with the Protestants, struggled against the bill in the Lords: the Commons were "all of one opinion," and Henry himself acted as spokesman on the side of the articles. In London alone five hundred Protestants were indicted under the new act. Latimer and Shaxton were imprisoned, and the former forced into a resignation of his see. Cranmer himself was saved only by Henry's personal favor. But the first burst of triumph had no sooner spent itself than the strong hand of Cromwell again made itself felt. Though his opinions remained those of the New Learning and differed little from the general sentiment represented in the act, he leaned instinctively to the one

party which did not long for his fall. His wish was to restrain the Protestant excesses, but he had no mind to ruin the Protestants. The bishops were quietly released. The London indictments were quashed. The magistrates were checked in their enforcement of the law, while a general pardon cleared the prisons of the heretics who had been arrested under its provisions. A few months after the enactment of the Six Articles we find from a Protestant letter that persecution had wholly ceased, "the Word is powerfully preached and books of every kind may safely be exposed for sale."

At Cromwell's fall his designs seemed to be utterly abandoned. The marriage with Anne of Cleves was annulled, and a new queen found in Catherine Howard, a niece of the Duke of Norfolk. Norfolk himself returned to power, and resumed the policy which Cromwell had interrupted. Like the king he looked to an imperial alliance rather than an alliance with Francis and the Lutherans. He still clung to the dream of the New Learning, to a purification of the Church through a general council, and the reconciliation of England with the purified body of Catholicism. For such a purpose it was necessary to vindicate English orthodoxy, and to ally England with the emperor, by whose influence alone the assembly of such a council could be brought about. To the hotter Catholics indeed, as to the hotter Protestants, the years after Cromwell's fall seemed years of a gradual return to Catholicism. There was a slight sharpening of persecution for the Protestants, and restrictions were put on the reading of the English Bible. But neither Norfolk nor his master desired any rigorous measure of reaction. There was no thought of reviving the old superstitions, or undoing the work which had been done, but simply of guarding the purified faith against Lutheran heresy. The work of supplying men with means of devotion in their own tongue was still carried on by the publication of an English Litany and prayers, which furnished the germ of the national prayer-book of a later time. The greater abbeys, which had been saved by the energetic resistance of the Parliament in 1536, had in 1539 been involved in the same ruin with the smaller; but in spite of this confiscation the treasury was now empty, and by a bill of 1545 more than two thousand chantries and chapels, with a hundred and ten

hospitals, were suppressed to the profit of the Crown. If the friendship of England was offered to Charles, when the struggle between France and the House of Austria burst again for a time into flame, it was because Henry saw in the imperial alliance the best hope for the reformation of the Church and the restoration of unity. But, as Cromwell had foreseen, the time for a peaceful reform and for a general reunion of Christendom was past. The council, so passionately desired, met at Trent in no spirit of conciliation, but to ratify the very superstitions and errors against which the New Learning had protested, and which England and Germany had flung away. The long hostility of France and the House of Austria merged in the greater struggle which was opening between Catholicism and the Reformation. The emperor allied himself definitely with the pope. As their hopes of a middle course faded, the Catholic nobles themselves drifted unconsciously with the tide of reaction. Anne Ascue was tortured and burnt with three companions for the denial of Transubstantiation. Latimer was examined before the council; and Cranmer himself, who in the general dissolution of the moderate party was drifting towards Protestantism as Norfolk was drifting towards Rome, was for a moment in danger. But at the last hours of his life Henry proved himself true to the work he had begun. His resolve not to bow to the pretensions of the papacy sanctioned at Trent threw him, whether he would or no, back on the policy of the great minister whom he had hurried to the block. He offered to unite in a "League Christian" with the German princes. He consented to the change, suggested by Cranmer, of the Mass into a Communion Service. He flung the Duke of Norfolk into the Tower as a traitor, and sent his son, the Earl of Surrey, to the block. The Earl of Hertford, the head of the "new men," and known as a patron of the Protestants, came to the front, and was appointed one of the Council of Regency which Henry nominated at his death.

Catherine Howard atoned like Anne Boleyn for her unchastity by a traitor's death; her successor on the throne, Catherine Parr, had the luck to outlive the king. But of Henry's numerous marriages only three children survived: Mary and Elizabeth, the daughters of Catherine of Aragon

and of Anne Boleyn, and Edward, the boy who now ascended the throne as Edward the Sixth, his son by Jane Seymour. As Edward was but nine years old, Henry had appointed a carefully balanced Council of Regency; but the will fell into the keeping of Jane's brother, whom he had raised to the peerage as Lord Hertford, and who at a later time assumed the title of Duke of Somerset. When the list of regents was at last disclosed, Gardiner, who had till now been the leading minister, was declared to have been excluded from it; and Hertford seized the whole royal power with the title of Protector. His personal weakness forced him at once to seek for popular support by measures which marked the first retreat of the Monarchy from the position of pure absolutism which it had reached under Henry. The statute which had given to royal proclamations the force of law was repealed, and several of the new felonies and treasons which Cromwell had created and used with so terrible an effect were erased from the statute-book. The hope of support from the Protestants united with Hertford's personal predilections in his patronage of the innovations against which Henry had battled to the last. Cranmer had now drifted into a purely Protestant position; and his open break with the older system followed quickly on Hertford's rise to power. "This year," says a contemporary, "the Archbishop of Canterbury did eat meat openly in Lent in the Hall of Lambeth, the like of which was never seen since England was a Christian country." This significant act was followed by a rapid succession of sweeping changes. The legal prohibitions of Lollardry were removed; the Six Articles were repealed; a royal injunction removed all pictures and images from the churches; priests were permitted to marry; the new Communion which had taken the place of the Mass was ordered to be administered in both kinds and in the English tongue; an English Book of Common Prayer, the Liturgy which with slight alterations is still used in the Church of England, replaced the Missal and Breviary from which its contents are mainly drawn. These sweeping religious changes were carried through with the despotism, if not with the vigor, of Cromwell. Gardiner, who in his acceptance of the personal supremacy of the sovereign denounced all ecclesiastical changes made during the king's

minority as illegal and invalid, was sent to the Tower. The power of preaching was restricted by the issue of licenses only to the friends of the primate. While all counter arguments were rigidly suppressed, a crowd of Protestant pamphleteers flooded the country with vehement invectives against the Mass and its superstitious accompaniments. The assent of noble and landowner was won by the suppression of chantries and religious gilds, and by glutting their greed with the last spoils of the Church. German and Italian mercenaries were introduced to stamp out the wider popular discontent which broke out in the east, in the west, and in the midland counties. The Cornish-men refused to receive the new service "because it is like a Christmas game." Devonshire demanded in open revolt the restoration of the Mass and the Six Articles. The agrarian discontent, now heightened by economic changes, woke again in the general disorder. Twenty thousand men gathered round the "oak of Reformation" near Norwich, and repulsing the royal troops in a desperate engagement renewed the old cries for the removal of evil counselors, a prohibition of enclosures, and redress for the grievances of the poor.

Revolt was stamped out in blood; but the weakness which the Protector had shown in presence of the danger, his tampering with popular demands, and the anger of the nobles at his resolve to enforce the laws against enclosures and evictions, ended in his fall. He was forced by the council to resign, and his power passed to the Earl of Warwick, to whose ruthless severity the suppression of the revolt was mainly due. But the change of governors brought about no change of system. The rule of the upstart nobles who formed the Council of Regency became simply a rule of terror. "The greater part of the people," one of their creatures, Cecil, avowed, "is not in favor of defending this cause, but of aiding its adversaries; on that side are the greater part of the nobles, who absent themselves from court, all the bishops save three or four, almost all the judges and lawyers, almost all the justices of the peace, the priests who can move their flocks any way, for the whole of the commonalty is in such a state of irritation that it will easily follow any stir towards change." But, heedless of danger from without or from within, Cranmer and his

colleagues advanced yet more boldly in the career of innovation. Four prelates who adhered to the older system were deprived of their sees and committed on frivolous pretexts to the Tower. A new Catechism embodied the doctrines of the reformers; and a Book of Homilies, which enforced the chief Protestant tenets, was appointed to be read in churches. A crowning defiance was given to the doctrine of the Mass by an order to demolish the stone altars and replace them by wooden tables, which were stationed for the most part in the middle of the church. A revised prayer-book was issued, and every change made in it leaned directly towards the extreme Protestantism which was at this time finding a home at Geneva. Forty-two Articles of Religion were introduced; and though since reduced by omissions to thirty-nine, these have remained to this day the formal standard of doctrine in the English Church. The sufferings of the Protestants had failed to teach them the worth of religious liberty; and a new code of ecclesiastical laws, which was ordered to be drawn up by a board of commissioners as a substitute for the Canon Law of the Catholic Church, although it shrank from the penalty of death, attached that of perpetual imprisonment or exile to the crimes of heresy, blasphemy, and adultery, and declared excommunication to involve a severance of the offender from the mercy of God, and his deliverance into the tyranny of the devil. Delays in the completion of this code prevented its legal establishment during Edward's reign; but the use of the new Liturgy and attendance at the new service were enforced by imprisonment, and subscription to the Articles of Faith was demanded by royal authority from all clergymen, churchwardens, and schoolmasters. The distaste for changes so hurried and so rigorously enforced was increased by the daring speculations of the more extreme Protestants. The real value of the religious revolution of the sixteenth century to mankind lay, not in its substitution of one creed for another, but in the new spirit of inquiry, the new freedom of thought and of discussion, which was awakened during the process of change. But however familiar such a truth may be to us, it was absolutely hidden from the England of the time. Men heard with horror that the foundations of faith and morality were questioned, polygamy advocated,

oaths denounced as unlawful, community of goods raised into a sacred obligation, the very Godhead of the Founder of Christianity denied. The repeal of the Statute of Heresy left the powers of the Common Law intact, and Cranmer availed himself of these to send heretics of the last class without mercy to the stake; but within the Church itself the primate's desire for uniformity was roughly resisted by the more ardent members of his own party. Hooper, who had been named Bishop of Gloucester, refused to wear the episcopal habits, and denounced them as the livery of the "harlot of Babylon," a name for the papacy which was supposed to have been discovered in the Apocalypse. Ecclesiastical order was almost at an end. Priests flung aside the surplice as superstitious. Patrons of livings presented their huntsmen or gamekeepers to the benefices in their gift, and kept the stipend. All teaching of divinity ceased at the universities: the students indeed had fallen off in numbers, the libraries were in part scattered or burnt, the intellectual impulse of the New Learning died away. One noble measure indeed, the foundation of eighteen grammar-schools, was destined to throw a luster over the name of Edward, but it had no time to bear fruit in his reign. All that men saw was religious and political chaos, in which ecclesiastical order had perished, and in which politics were dying down into the squabbles of a knot of nobles over the spoils of the Church and the Crown. The plunder of the chantries and the gilds failed to glut the appetite of the crew of spoilers. Half the lands of every see were flung to them in vain: the wealthy see of Durham had been suppressed to satisfy their greed; and the whole endowments of the Church were threatened with confiscation. But while the courtiers gorged themselves with manors, the treasury grew poorer. The coinage was again debased. Crown lands to the value of five millions of our modern money had been granted away to the friends of Somerset and Warwick. The royal expenditure had mounted in seventeen years to more than four times its previous total. It is clear that England must soon have risen against the misrule of the Protectorate, if the Protectorate had not fallen by the intestine divisions of the plunderers themselves.

Section II. — The Martyrs, 1553–1558

The waning health of Edward warned Warwick, who had now become Duke of Northumberland, of an unlooked-for danger. Mary, the daughter of Catherine of Aragon, who had been placed next to Edward by the Act of Succession, remained firm amidst all the changes of the time to the older faith; and her accession threatened to be the signal for its return. But the bigotry of the young king was easily brought to consent to a daring scheme by which her rights might be set aside. Edward's "plan," as Northumberland dictated it, annulled both the Statute of Succession and the will of his father, to whom the right of disposing of the Crown after the death of his own children had been entrusted by Parliament. It set aside both Mary and Elizabeth, who stood next in the act. With this exclusion of the direct line of Henry the Eighth the succession would vest, if the rules of hereditary descent were observed, in the descendants of his elder sister Margaret, who had become by her first husband, James the Fourth of Scotland, the grandmother of the young Scottish Queen, Mary Stuart; and by a second marriage, with the Earl of Angus, was the grandmother of Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley. Henry's will, however, had passed by the children of Margaret, and had placed next to Elizabeth in the succession the children of his younger sister Mary, the wife of Charles Brandon, the Duke of Suffolk. Frances, Mary's child by this marriage, was still living, and was the mother of three daughters by her marriage with Grey, Lord Dorset, a hot partisan of the religious changes, who had been raised under the Protectorate to the dukedom of Suffolk. Frances however was passed over, and Edward's "plan" named her eldest child Jane as his successor. The marriage of Jane Grey with Guildford Dudley, the fourth son of Northumberland, was all that was needed to complete the unscrupulous plot. The consent of the judges and council to her succession was extorted by the authority of the dying king, and the new sovereign was proclaimed on Edward's death. But the temper of the whole people rebelled against so lawless a usurpation. The eastern counties rose as one man to support Mary; and when Northumberland marched from London

with ten thousand at his back to crush the rising, the Londoners, Protestant as they were, showed their ill will by a stubborn silence. "The people crowd to look upon us," the duke noted gloomily, "but not one calls 'God speed ye.'" The council no sooner saw the popular reaction than they proclaimed Mary queen; the fleet and the levies of the shires declared in her favor. Northumberland's courage suddenly gave way, and his retreat to Cambridge was the signal for a general defection. The duke himself threw his cap into the air and shouted with his men for Queen Mary. But his submission failed to avert his doom; and the death of Northumberland drew with it the imprisonment in the Tower of the hapless girl whom he had made the tool of his ambition. The whole system which had been pursued during Edward's reign fell with a sudden crash. London indeed retained much of its Protestant sympathy, but over the rest of the country the tide of reaction swept without a check. The married priests were driven from their churches, the images were replaced. In many parishes the new prayer-book was set aside and the Mass restored. The Parliament which met in October annulled the laws made respecting religion during the past reign. Gardiner was drawn from the Tower. Bonner and the deposed bishops were restored to their sees. Ridley with the others who had displaced them were again expelled, and Latimer and Cranmer were sent to the Tower. But with the restoration of the system of Henry the Eighth the popular impulse was satisfied. The people had no more sympathy with Mary's leanings towards Rome than with the violence of the Protestants. The Parliament was with difficulty brought to set aside the new prayer-book, and clung obstinately to the Church lands and to the royal supremacy.

Nor was England more favorable to the marriage on which, from motives both of policy and religious zeal, Mary had set her heart. The emperor had ceased to be the object of hope or confidence as a mediator who would at once purify the Church from abuses and restore the unity of Christendom: he had ranged himself definitely on the side of the papacy and of the Council of Trent; and the cruelties of the Inquisition which he introduced into Flanders gave a terrible indication of the bigotry which he was to bequeath to his House.

The marriage with his son Philip, whose hand he offered to his cousin Mary, meant an absolute submission to the papacy, and the undoing not only of the Protestant reformation, but of the more moderate reforms of the New Learning. On the other hand, it would have the political advantage of securing Mary's throne against the pretensions of the young Queen of Scots, Mary Stuart, who had become formidable by her marriage with the heir of the French crown; and whose adherents already alleged the illegitimate birth of both Mary and Elizabeth, through the annulling of their mothers' marriages, as a ground for denying their right of succession. To the issue of the marriage he proposed, Charles promised the heritage of the Low Countries, while he accepted the demand made by Mary's minister, Bishop Gardiner of Winchester, and by the council, of complete independence both of policy and action on the part of England, in case of such a union. The temptation was great, and Mary's resolution overleapt all obstacles. But in spite of the toleration which she had promised, and had as yet observed, the announcement of her design drove the Protestants into a panic of despair. Risings which broke out in the west and center of the country were quickly put down, and the Duke of Suffolk, who appeared in arms at Leicester, was sent to the Tower. The danger was far more formidable when the dread that Spaniards were coming "to conquer the realm" roused Kent into revolt under Sir Thomas Wyatt. The ships in the Thames submitted to be seized by the insurgents. A party of the trainbands of London, who marched under the Duke of Norfolk against them, deserted to the rebels in a mass with shouts of "A Wyatt! a Wyatt! we are all Englishmen!" Had the insurgents moved quickly on the capital, its gates would at once have been flung open and success would have been assured. But in the critical moment Mary was saved by her queenly courage. Riding boldly to the Guildhall she appealed with "a man's voice" to the loyalty of the citizens, and when Wyatt appeared on the Southwark bank the bridge was secured. The issue hung on the question which side London would take; and the insurgent leader pushed desperately up the Thames, seized a bridge at Kingston, threw his force across the river, and marched rapidly back on the capital.

The night march along miry roads wearied and disorganized his men, the bulk of whom were cut off from their leader by a royal force which had gathered in the fields at what is now Hyde Park Corner, but Wyatt himself, with a handful of followers, pushed desperately on to Temple Bar. "I have kept touch," he cried as he sank exhausted at the gate; but it was closed, his adherents within were powerless to effect their promised diversion in his favor, and the daring leader was seized and sent to the Tower.

The courage of the queen, who had refused to fly even while the rebels were marching beneath her palace walls, was only equaled by her terrible revenge. The hour was come when the Protestants were at her feet, and she struck without mercy. Lady Jane, her father, her husband, and her uncle atoned for the ambition of the House of Suffolk by the death of traitors. Wyatt and his chief adherents followed them to execution, while the bodies of the poorer insurgents were dangling on gibbets round London. Elizabeth, who had with some reason been suspected of complicity in the insurrection, was sent to the Tower, and only saved from death by the interposition of the council. But the failure of the revolt not only crushed the Protestant party, it secured the marriage on which Mary was resolved. She used it to wring a reluctant consent from the Parliament, and meeting Philip at Winchester in the ensuing summer became his wife. The temporizing measures to which the queen had been forced by the earlier difficulties of her reign could now be laid safely aside. Mary was resolved to bring about a submission to Rome; and her minister Gardiner fell back on the old ecclesiastical order, as the moderate party which had supported the policy of Henry the Eighth saw its hopes disappear, and ranged himself definitely on the side of a unity which could now only be brought about by a reconciliation with the papacy. The Spanish match was hardly concluded, when the negotiations with Rome were brought to a final issue. The attainder of Reginald Pole, who had been appointed by the pope to receive the submission of the realm, was reversed; and the legate, who entered London by the river with his cross gleaming from the prow of his barge, was solemnly welcomed by a compliant Parliament. The two Houses decided by

a formal vote to return to the obedience of the papal see, and received on their knees the absolution which freed the realm from the guilt incurred by its schism and heresy. But, even in the hour of her triumph, the temper both of Parliament and the nation warned the queen of the failure of her hope to bind England to a purely Catholic policy. The growing independence of the two Houses was seen in their rejection of measure after measure proposed by the Crown. A proposal to oust Elizabeth from the line of succession could not even be submitted to the Houses, nor could their assent be won to the postponing of her succession to that of Philip. Though the statutes abolishing papal jurisdiction in England were repealed, they rejected all proposals for the restoration of Church lands to the clergy. A proposal to renew the laws against heresy was thrown out by the lords, even after the failure of Wyatt's insurrection, and only Philip's influence secured the reenactment of the statute of Henry the Fifth in a later Parliament. Nor was the temper of the nation at large less decided. The sullen discontent of London compelled its bishop, Bonner, to withdraw the inquisitorial articles by which he hoped to purge his diocese of heresy. Even the council was divided on the question of persecution, and in the very interests of Catholicism the emperor himself counseled prudence and delay. Philip gave the same counsel. But whether from without or from within, warning was wasted on the fierce bigotry of the queen.

It was a moment when the prospects of the party of reform seemed utterly hopeless. Spain had taken openly the lead in the great Catholic movement, and England was being dragged, however reluctantly, by the Spanish marriage into the current of reaction. Its opponents were broken by the failure of their revolt, and unpopular through the memory of their violence and greed. Now that the laws against heresy were enacted, Mary pressed for their execution; and in 1555 the opposition of her councilors was at last mastered, and the work of death began. But the cause which prosperity had ruined revived in the dark hour of persecution. If the Protestants had not known how to govern, they knew how to die. The story of Rowland Taylor, the Vicar of Hadleigh, tells us more of the work which was now begun, and of the effect

it was likely to produce, than pages of historic dissertation. Taylor, who as a man of mark had been one of the first victims chosen for execution, was arrested in London, and condemned to suffer in his own parish. His wife, "suspecting that her husband should that night be carried away," had waited through the darkness with her children in the porch of St. Botolph's beside Aldgate. "Now when the sheriff his company came against St. Botolph's Church, Elizabeth cried, saying, 'O my dear father! Mother! mother! here is my father led away!' Then cried his wife, 'Rowland, Rowland, where art thou?'—for it was a very dark morning, that the one could not see the other. Dr. Taylor answered, 'I am here, dear wife,' and stayed. The sheriff's men would have led him forth, but the sheriff said, 'Stay a little, masters, I pray you, and let him speak to his wife.' Then came she to him, and he took his daughter Mary in his arms, and he and his wife and Elizabeth knelt down and said the Lord's prayer. At which sight the sheriff wept apace, and so did divers others of the company. After they had prayed he rose up and kissed his wife and shook her by the hand, and said, 'Farewell, my dear wife, be of good comfort, for I am quiet in my conscience! God shall still be a father to my children.' . . . Then said his wife, 'God be with thee, dear Rowland! I will, with God's grace, meet thee at Hadleigh.' . . . All the way Dr. Taylor was merry and cheerful as one that accounted himself going to a most pleasant banquet or bridal. . . . Coming within two miles of Hadleigh he desired to light off his horse, which done he leaped and set a frisk or twain as men commonly do for dancing. 'Why, master doctor,' quoth the sheriff, 'how do you now?' He answered, 'Well, God be praised, master sheriff, never better; for now I know I am almost at home. I lack not past two stiles to go over, and I am even at my Father's house!' . . . The streets of Hadleigh were beset on both sides with men and women of the town and country who waited to see him; whom when they beheld so led to death, with weeping eyes and lamentable voices, they cried, 'Ah, good Lord! there goeth our good shepherd from us!'" The journey was at last over. "'What place is this,' he asked, 'and what meaneth it that so much people are gathered together?' It was answered, 'It is Old-

ham Common, the place where you must suffer, and the people are come to look upon you.' Then said he, 'Thanked be God, I am even at home!' . . . But when the people saw his reverend and ancient face, with a long white beard, they burst out with weeping tears and cried, saying, 'God save thee, good Dr. Taylor; God strengthen thee and help thee; the Holy Ghost comfort thee!' He wished, but was not suffered, to speak. When he had prayed, he went to the stake and kissed it, and set himself into a pitch barrel which they had set for him to stand on, and so stood with his back upright against the stake, with his hands folded together and his eyes towards heaven, and so let himself be burned." One of the executioners "cruelly cast a fagot at him, which hit upon his head and brake his face that the blood ran down his visage. Then said Dr. Taylor, 'O friend, I have harm enough — what needed that?'" One more act of brutality brought his sufferings to an end. — "So stood he still without either crying or moving, with his hands folded together, till Soyce with a halberd struck him on the head that the brains fell out, and the dead corpse fell down into the fire."

The terror of death was powerless against men like these. Bonner, the Bishop of London, to whom, as bishop of the diocese in which the council sat, its victims were generally delivered for execution, but who, in spite of the nickname and hatred which his official prominence in the work of death earned him, seems to have been naturally a good-humored and merciful man, asked a youth who was brought before him whether he thought he could bear the fire. The boy at once held his hand without flinching in the flame of a candle which stood by. Rogers, a fellow worker with Tyndale in the translation of the Bible, and one of the foremost among the Protestant preachers, died bathing his hands in the flame "as if it had been in cold water." Even the commonest lives gleamed for a moment into poetry at the stake. "Pray for me," a boy, William Hunter, who had been brought home to Brentwood to suffer, asked of the bystanders. "I will pray no more for thee," one of them replied, "than I will pray for a dog." "'Then,' said William, 'Son of God, shine upon me'; and immediately the sun in the elements shone out of a dark cloud so full in his face that he was constrained to look another

way; whereat the people mused, because it was so dark a little time before." The persecution fell heavily on London, and on Kent, Sussex, and the eastern counties, the homes of the mining and manufacturing industries; a host of Protestants were driven over sea to find refuge at Strasburg or Geneva. But the work of terror failed in the very ends for which it was wrought. The old spirit of insolent defiance, of outrageous violence, was roused again at the challenge of persecution. A Protestant hung a string of puddings round a priest's neck in derision of his beads. The restored images were grossly insulted. The old scurrilous ballads were heard again in the streets. One miserable wretch, driven to frenzy, stabbed the priest of St. Margaret's as he stood with the chalice in his hand. It was a more formidable sign of the times that acts of violence such as these no longer stirred the people at large to their former resentment. The horror of the persecution left no room for other feelings. Every death at the stake won hundreds to the cause of its victims. "You have lost the hearts of twenty thousands that were rank Papists," a Protestant wrote to Bonner, "within these twelve months." Bonner indeed, never a very zealous persecutor, was sick of his work; and the energy of the bishops soon relaxed. But Mary had no thought of hesitation in the course she had begun. "Rattling letters" from the council roused the lagging prelates to fresh activity, and the martyrdoms went steadily on. Two prelates had already perished: Hooper, the Bishop of Gloucester, had been burned in his own cathedral city; Ferrar, the Bishop of St. David's, had suffered at Caermarthen. Latimer and Bishop Ridley of London were now drawn from their prison at Oxford. "Play the man, Master Ridley," cried the old preacher of the Reformation as the flames shot up around him; "we shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England as I trust shall never be put out." One victim remained, far beneath many who had preceded him in character, but high above them in his position in the Church of England. The other prelates who had suffered had been created after the separation from Rome, and were hardly regarded as bishops by their opponents. But, whatever had been his part in the schism, Cranmer had received his pallium from the pope. He was, in the

eyes of all, Archbishop of Canterbury, the successor of St. Augustine and of St. Thomas in the second see of Western Christendom. To burn the primate of the English Church for heresy was to shut out meaner victims from all hope of escape. But revenge and religious zeal alike urged Mary to bring Cranmer to the stake. First among the many decisions in which the archbishop had prostituted justice to Henry's will stood that by which he had annulled the king's marriage with Catherine and declared Mary a bastard. The last of his political acts had been to join, whether reluctantly or no, in the shameless plot to exclude Mary from the throne. His great position too made him more than any man the representative of the religious revolution which had passed over the land. His figure stood with those of Henry and of Cromwell on the frontispiece of the English Bible. The decisive change which had been given to the character of the Reformation under Edward was due wholly to Cranmer. It was his voice that men heard and still hear in the accents of the English Liturgy. As an archbishop, Cranmer's judgment rested with no meaner tribunal than that of Rome, and his execution had been necessarily delayed till its sentence could be given. But the courage which he had shown since the accession of Mary gave way the moment his final doom was announced. The moral cowardice which had displayed itself in his miserable compliance with the lust and despotism of Henry displayed itself again in six successive recantations by which he hoped to purchase pardon. But pardon was impossible; and Cranmer's strangely mingled nature found a power in its very weakness when he was brought into the church of St. Mary at Oxford to repeat his recantation on the way to the stake. "Now," ended his address to the hushed congregation before him, "now I come to the great thing that troubleth my conscience more than any other thing that ever I said or did in my life, and that is the setting abroad of writings contrary to the truth; which here I now renounce and refuse as things written by my hand contrary to the truth which I thought in my heart, and written for fear of death to save my life, if it might be. And, forasmuch as my hand offended in writing contrary to my heart, my hand therefore shall be the first punished; for if I come to the fire,

it shall be the first burned." "This was the hand that wrote it," he again exclaimed at the stake, "therefore it shall suffer first punishment"; and holding it steadily in the flame "he never stirred nor cried" till life was gone.

It was with the unerring instinct of a popular movement that, among a crowd of far more heroic sufferers, the Protestants fixed, in spite of his recantations, on the martyrdom of Cranmer as the death-blow to Catholicism in England. For one man who felt within him the joy of Rowland Taylor at the prospect of the stake, there were thousands who felt the shuddering dread of Cranmer. The triumphant cry of Latimer could reach only hearts as bold as his own; but the sad pathos of the primate's humiliation and repentance struck chords of sympathy and pity in the hearts of all. It is from that moment that we may trace the bitter remembrance of the blood shed in the cause of Rome; which, however partial and unjust it must seem to an historic observer, still lies graven deep in the temper of the English people. The overthrow of his projects for the permanent acquisition of England to the House of Austria had disenchanted Philip of his stay in the realm; and on the disappearance of all hope of a child, he had left the country in spite of Mary's passionate entreaties. But the queen struggled desperately on. She did what was possible to satisfy the unyielding pope. In the face of the Parliament's significant reluctance even to restore the first-fruits to the Church, she refounded all she could of the abbeys which had been suppressed; the greatest of these, that of Westminster, was reestablished in 1556. Above all, she pressed on the work of persecution. It had spread now from bishops and priests to the people itself. The sufferers were sent in batches to the flames. In a single day thirteen victims, two of them women, were burned at Stratford-le-Bow. Seventy-three Protestants of Colchester were dragged through the streets of London, tied to a single rope. A new commission for the suppression of heresy was exempted by royal authority from all restrictions of law which fettered its activity. The universities were visited; and the corpses of foreign teachers who had found a resting-place there under Edward were torn from their graves and reduced to ashes. The penalties of martial law were threatened against the

possessors of heretical books issued from Geneva; the treasonable contents of which indeed, and their constant exhortations to rebellion and civil war, justly called for stern repression. But the work of terror broke down before the silent revolt of the whole nation. Open sympathy began to be shown to the sufferers for conscience' sake. In the three and a half years of the persecution nearly three hundred victims had perished at the stake. The people sickened at the work of death. The crowd round the fire at Smithfield shouted "Amen" to the prayer of seven martyrs whom Bonner had condemned, and prayed with them that God would strengthen them. A general discontent was roused when, in spite of the pledges given at her marriage, Mary dragged England into a war to support Philip — who on the emperor's resignation had succeeded to his dominions of Spain, Flanders, and the New World — in a struggle against France. The war ended in disaster. With characteristic secrecy and energy, the Duke of Guise flung himself upon Calais, and compelled it to surrender before succor could arrive. "The chief jewel of the realm," as Mary herself called it, was suddenly reft away; and the surrender of Guisnes, which soon followed, left England without a foot of land on the Continent. Bitterly as the blow was felt, the council, though passionately pressed by the queen, could find neither money nor men for any attempt to recover the town. The forced loan to which she resorted came in slowly. The levies mutinied and dispersed. The death of Mary alone averted a general revolt, and a burst of enthusiastic joy hailed the accession of Elizabeth.

Section III.— Elizabeth, 1558–1560

Never had the fortunes of England sunk to a lower ebb than at the moment when Elizabeth mounted the throne. The country was humiliated by defeat and brought to the verge of rebellion by the bloodshed and misgovernment of Mary's reign. The old social discontent, trampled down for a time by the horsemen of Somerset, remained a menace to public order. The religious strife had passed beyond hope of reconciliation, now that the reformers were parted from

their opponents by the fires of Smithfield and the party of the New Learning all but dissolved. The more earnest Catholics were bound helplessly to Rome. The temper of the Protestants, burned at home or driven into exile abroad, had become a fiercer thing, and the Calvinistic refugees were pouring back from Geneva with dreams of revolutionary change in Church and State. England, dragged at the heels of Philip into a useless and ruinous war, was left without an ally save Spain; while France, mistress of Calais, became mistress of the Channel. Not only was Scotland a standing danger in the north, through the French marriage of its queen, Mary Stuart, and its consequent bondage to French policy; but Mary Stuart and her husband now assumed the style and arms of English sovereigns, and threatened to rouse every Catholic throughout the realm against Elizabeth's title. In presence of this host of dangers the country lay helpless, without army or fleet, or the means of manning one, for the treasury, already drained by the waste of Edward's reign, had been utterly exhausted by Mary's restoration of the Church lands in possession of the Crown, and by the cost of her war with France.

England's one hope lay in the character of her queen. Elizabeth was now in her twenty-fifth year. Personally she had more than her mother's beauty; her figure was commanding, her face long but queenly and intelligent, her eyes quick and fine. She had grown up amidst the liberal culture of Henry's court a bold horsewoman, a good shot, a graceful dancer, a skilled musician, and an accomplished scholar. She studied every morning the Greek Testament, and followed this by the tragedies of Sophocles or orations of Demosthenes, and could "rub up her rusty Greek" at need to bandy pedantry with a vice-chancellor. But she was far from being a mere pedant. The new literature which was springing up around her found constant welcome in her court. She spoke Italian and French as fluently as her mother tongue. She was familiar with Ariosto and Tasso. Even amidst the affectation and love of anagrams and puerilities which sullied her later years, she listened with delight to the "Faerie Queen," and found a smile for "Master Spenser" when he appeared in her presence. Her moral temper recalled in its strange

contrasts the mixed blood within her veins. She was at once the daughter of Henry and of Anne Boleyn. From her father she inherited her frank and hearty address, her love of popularity and of free intercourse with the people, her dauntless courage and her amazing self-confidence. Her harsh, manlike voice, her impetuous will, her pride, her furious outbursts of anger, came to her with her Tudor blood. She rated great nobles as if they were schoolboys; she met the insolence of Essex with a box on the ear; she would break now and then into the gravest deliberations to swear at her ministers like a fishwife. But strangely in contrast with the violent outlines of her Tudor temper stood the sensuous, self-indulgent nature she derived from Anne Boleyn. Splendor and pleasure were with Elizabeth the very air she breathed. Her delight was to move in perpetual progresses from castle to castle through a series of gorgeous pageants, fanciful and extravagant as a calif's dream. She loved gaiety and laughter and wit. A happy retort or a finished compliment never failed to win her favor. She hoarded jewels. Her dresses were innumerable. Her vanity remained, even to old age, the vanity of a coquette in her teens. No adulation was too fulsome for her, no flattery of her beauty too gross. "To see her was heaven," Hatton told her, "the lack of her was hell." She would play with her rings that her courtiers might note the delicacy of her hands; or dance a coranto that the French ambassador, hidden dexterously behind a curtain, might report her sprightliness to his master. Her levity, her frivolous laughter, her unwomanly jests, gave color to a thousand scandals. Her character in fact, like her portraits, was utterly without shade. Of womanly reserve or self-restraint she knew nothing. No instinct of delicacy veiled the voluptuous temper which had broken out in the romps of her girlhood and showed itself almost ostentatiously throughout her later life. Personal beauty in a man was a sure passport to her liking. She patted handsome young squires on the neck when they knelt to kiss her hand, and fondled her "sweet Robin," Lord Leicester, in the face of the court.

It was no wonder that the statesmen whom she outwitted held Elizabeth almost to the last to be little more than a frivolous woman, or that Philip of Spain wondered how "a

wanton" could hold in check the policy of the Escurial. But the Elizabeth whom they saw was far from being all of Elizabeth. The wilfulness of Henry, the triviality of Anne Boleyn played over the surface of a nature hard as steel, a temper purely intellectual, the very type of reason untouched by imagination or passion. Luxurious and pleasure-loving as she seemed, Elizabeth lived simply and frugally, and she worked hard. Her vanity and caprice had no weight whatever with her in State affairs. The coquette of the presence-chamber became the coolest and hardest of politicians at the council-board. Fresh from the flattery of her courtiers, she would tolerate no flattery in the closet; she was herself plain and downright of speech with her counselors, and she looked for a corresponding plainness of speech in return. If any trace of her sex lingered in her actual statesmanship, it was seen in the simplicity and tenacity of purpose that often underlies a woman's fluctuations of feeling. It was this in part which gave her her marked superiority over the statesmen of her time. No nobler group of ministers ever gathered round a council-board than those who gathered round the council-board of Elizabeth. But she was the instrument of none. She listened, she weighed, she used or put by the counsels of each in turn, but her policy as a whole was her own. It was a policy, not of genius, but of good sense. Her aims were simple and obvious: to preserve her throne, to keep England out of war, to restore civil and religious order. Something of womanly caution and timidity perhaps backed the passionless indifference with which she set aside the larger schemes of ambition which were ever opening before her eyes. She was resolute in her refusal of the Low Countries. She rejected with a laugh the offers of the Protestants to make her "head of the religion" and "mistress of the seas." But her amazing success in the end sprang mainly from this wise limitation of her aims. She had a finer sense than any of her counselors of her real resources; she knew instinctively how far she could go, and what she could do. Her cold, critical intellect was never swayed by enthusiasm or by panic either to exaggerate or to underestimate her risks or her power.

Of political wisdom indeed in its larger and more generous

sense Elizabeth had little or none; but her political tact was unerring. She seldom saw her course at a glance, but she played with a hundred courses, fitfully and discursively, as a musician runs his fingers over the keyboard, till she hit suddenly upon the right one. Her nature was essentially practical and of the present. She distrusted a plan in fact just in proportion to its speculative range or its outlook into the future. Her notion of statesmanship lay in watching how things turned out around her, and in seizing the moment for making the best of them. A policy of this limited, practical, tentative order was not only best suited to the England of her day, to its small resources and the transitional character of its religious and political belief, but it was one eminently suited to Elizabeth's peculiar powers. It was a policy of detail, and in details her wonderful readiness and ingenuity found scope for their exercise. "No war, my lords," the queen used to cry imperiously at the council-board, "no war!" but her hatred of war sprang less from her aversion to blood or to expense, real as was her aversion to both, than from the fact that peace left the field open to the diplomatic maneuvers and intrigues in which she excelled. Her delight in the consciousness of her ingenuity broke out in a thousand puckish freaks, freaks in which one can hardly see any purpose beyond the purpose of sheer mystification. She reveled in "byways" and "crooked ways." She played with grave cabinets as a cat plays with a mouse, and with much of the same feline delight in the mere embarrassment of her victims. When she was weary of mystifying foreign statesmen, she turned to find fresh sport in mystifying her own ministers. Had Elizabeth written the story of her reign she would have prided herself, not on the triumph of England or the ruin of Spain, but on the skill with which she had hoodwinked and outwitted every statesman in Europe during fifty years. Nor was her trickery without political value. Ignoble, inexpressibly wearisome, as the queen's diplomacy seems to us now, tracing it as we do through a thousand despatches, it succeeded in its main end. It gained time, and every year that was gained doubled Elizabeth's strength. Nothing is more revolting in the queen, but nothing is more characteristic, than her shameless mendacity. It was an age of politi-

cal lying, but in the profusion and recklessness of her lies Elizabeth stood without a peer in Christendom. A falsehood was to her simply an intellectual means of meeting a difficulty; and the ease with which she asserted or denied whatever suited her purpose was only equaled by the cynical indifference with which she met the exposure of her lies as soon as their purpose was answered. The same purely intellectual view of things showed itself in the dexterous use she made of her very faults. Her levity carried her gaily over moments of detection and embarrassment where better women would have died of shame. She screened her tentative and hesitating statesmanship under the natural timidity and vacillation of her sex. She turned her very luxury and sports to good account. There were moments of grave danger in her reign when the country remained indifferent to its perils, as it saw the queen give her days to hawking and hunting, and her nights to dancing and plays. Her vanity and affectation, her womanly fickleness and caprice, all had their part in the diplomatic comedies she played with the successive candidates for her hand. If political necessities made her life a lonely one, she had at any rate the satisfaction of averting war and conspiracies by love sonnets and romantic interviews, or of gaining a year of tranquillity by the dexterous spinning out of a flirtation.

As we track Elizabeth through her tortuous mazes of lying and intrigue, the sense of her greatness is almost lost in a sense of contempt. But wrapped as they were in a cloud of mystery, the aims of her policy were throughout temperate and simple, and they were pursued with a singular tenacity. The sudden acts of energy which from time to time broke her habitual hesitation proved that it was no hesitation of weakness. Elizabeth could wait and finesse; but when the hour was come she could strike, and strike hard. Her natural temper indeed tended to a rash self-confidence rather than to self-distrust. She had, as strong natures always have, an unbounded confidence in her luck. "Her Majesty counts much on Fortune," Walsingham wrote bitterly; "I wish she would trust more in Almighty God." The diplomatists who censured at one moment her irresolution, her delay, her changes of front, censure at the next her "obstinacy," her iron will,

her defiance of what seemed to them inevitable ruin. "This woman," Philip's envoy wrote after a wasted remonstrance, "this woman is possessed by a hundred thousand devils." To her own subjects, indeed, who knew nothing of her maneuvers and retreats, of her "byways" and "crooked ways," she seemed the embodiment of dauntless resolution. Brave as they were, the men who swept the Spanish Main or glided between the icebergs of Baffin Bay never doubted that the palm of bravery lay with their queen. Her steadiness and courage in the pursuit of her aims was equaled by the wisdom with which she chose the men to accomplish them. She had a quick eye for merit of any sort, and a wonderful power of enlisting its whole energy in her service. The sagacity which chose Cecil and Walsingham was just as unerring in its choice of the meanest of her agents. Her success indeed in securing from the beginning of her reign to its end, with the single exception of Leicester, precisely the right men for the work she set them to do sprang in great measure from the noblest characteristic of her intellect. If in loftiness of aim her temper fell below many of the tempers of her time, in the breadth of its range, in the universality of its sympathy, it stood far above them all. Elizabeth could talk poetry with Spenser and philosophy with Bruno; she could discuss Euphuism with Lyly, and enjoy the chivalry of Essex; she could turn from talk of the last fashions to pore with Cecil over despatches and treasury books; she could pass from tracking traitors with Walsingham to settle points of doctrine with Parker, or to calculate with Frobisher the chances of a northwest passage to the Indies. The versatility and many-sidedness of her mind enabled her to understand every phase of the intellectual movement of her day, and to fix by a sort of instinct on its higher representatives. But the greatness of the queen rests above all on her power over her people. We have had grander and nobler rulers, but none so popular as Elizabeth. The passion of love, of loyalty, of admiration, which finds its most perfect expression in the "Faerie Queen," throbbed as intensely through the veins of her meanest subjects. To England, during her reign of half a century, she was a virgin and a Protestant queen; and her immorality, her absolute want of religious enthusiasm, failed utterly to blur the bright-

ness of the national ideal. Her worst acts broke fruitlessly against the general devotion. A Puritan whose hand she cut off in a freak of tyrannous resentment waved his hat with the hand that was left, and shouted "God save Queen Elizabeth!" Of her faults, indeed, England beyond the circle of her court knew little or nothing. The shiftings of her diplomacy were never seen outside the royal closet. The nation at large could only judge her foreign policy by its main outlines, by its temperance and good sense, and above all by its success. But every Englishman was able to judge Elizabeth in her rule at home, in her love of peace, her instinct of order, the firmness and moderation of her government, the judicious spirit of conciliation and compromise among warring factions which gave the country an unexampled tranquillity at a time when almost every other country in Europe was torn with civil war. Every sign of the growing prosperity, the sight of London as it became the mart of the world, of stately mansions as they rose on every manor, told, and justly told, in Elizabeth's favor. In one act of her civil administration she showed the boldness and originality of a great ruler; for the opening of her reign saw her face the social difficulty which had so long impeded English progress, by the issue of a commission of inquiry which ended in the solution of the problem by the system of poor-laws. She lent a ready patronage to the new commerce; she considered its extension and protection as a part of public policy, and her statue in the center of the London Exchange was a tribute on the part of the merchant class to the interest with which she watched and shared personally in its enterprises. Her thrift won a general gratitude. The memories of the Terror and of the Martyrs threw into bright relief the aversion from bloodshed which was conspicuous in her earlier reign, and never wholly wanting through its fiercer close. Above all there was a general confidence in her instinctive knowledge of the national temper. Her finger was always on the public pulse. She knew exactly when she could resist the feeling of her people, and when she must give way before the new sentiment of freedom which her policy unconsciously fostered. But when she retreated, her defeat had all the grace of victory; and the frankness and unreserve of her surrender won back at once the love that her resistance had lost. Her atti-

tude at home in fact was that of a woman whose pride in the well-being of her subjects, and whose longing for their favor, was the one warm touch in the coldness of her natural temper. If Elizabeth could be said to love anything, she loved England. "Nothing," she said to her first Parliament in words of unwonted fire, "nothing, no worldly thing under the sun, is so dear to me as the love and good-will of my subjects." And the love and good-will which were so dear to her she fully won.

She clung perhaps to her popularity the more passionately that it hid in some measure from her the terrible loneliness of her life. She was the last of the Tudors, the last of Henry's children; and her nearest relatives were Mary Stuart and the House of Suffolk, one the avowed, the other the secret, claimant of her throne. Among her mother's kindred she found but a single cousin. Whatever womanly tenderness she had, wrapped itself around Leicester; but a marriage with Leicester was impossible, and every other union, could she even have bent to one, was denied to her by the political difficulties of her position. The one cry of bitterness which burst from Elizabeth revealed her terrible sense of the solitude of her life. "The Queen of Scots," she cried at the birth of James, "has a fair son, and I am but a barren stock." But the loneliness of her position only reflected the loneliness of her nature. She stood utterly apart from the world around her, sometimes above it, sometimes below it, but never of it. It was only on its intellectual side that Elizabeth touched the England of her day. All its moral aspects were simply dead to her. It was a time when men were being lifted into nobleness by the new moral energy which seemed suddenly to pulse through the whole people, when honor and enthusiasm took colors of poetic beauty, and religion became a chivalry. But the finer sentiments of the men around her touched Elizabeth simply as the fair tints of a picture would have touched her. She made her market with equal indifference out of the heroism of William of Orange or the bigotry of Philip. The noblest aims and lives were only counters on her board. She was the one soul in her realm whom the news of St. Bartholomew stirred to no thirst for vengeance; and while England was thrilling with its triumph over the

Armada, its queen was coolly grumbling over the cost, and making her profit out of the spoiled provisions she had ordered for the fleet that saved her. To the voice of gratitude, indeed, she was for the most part deaf. She accepted services such as were never rendered to any other English sovereign without a thought of return. Walsingham spent his fortune in saving her life and her throne, and she left him to die a beggar. But, as if by a strange irony, it was to this very want of sympathy that she owed some of the grander features of her character. If she was without love she was without hate. She cherished no petty resentments; she never stooped to envy or suspicion of the men who served her. She was indifferent to abuse. Her good humor was never ruffled by the charges of wantonness and cruelty with which the Jesuits filled every court in Europe. She was insensible to fear. Her life became at last the mark for assassin after assassin, but the thought of peril was the one hardest to bring home to her. Even when the Catholic plots broke out in her very household, she would listen to no proposals for the removal of Catholics from her court.

It was this moral isolation which told so strangely both for good and for evil on her policy towards the Church. The young queen was not without a sense of religion. But she was almost wholly destitute of spiritual emotion, or of any consciousness of the vast questions with which theology strove to deal. While the world around her was being swayed more and more by theological beliefs and controversies, Elizabeth was absolutely untouched by them. She was a child of the Italian Renascence rather than of the New Learning of Colet or Erasmus, and her attitude towards the enthusiasm of her time was that of Lorenzo de Medici towards Savonarola. Her mind was unruffled by the spiritual problems which were vexing the minds around her; to Elizabeth indeed they were not only unintelligible, they were a little ridiculous. She had the same intellectual contempt for the superstition of the Romanist as for the bigotry of the Protestant. While she ordered Catholic images to be flung into the fire, she quizzed the Puritans as "brethren in Christ." But she had no sort of religious aversion from either Puritan or Papist. The Protestants grumbled at the Catholic nobles

whom she admitted to the presence. The Catholics grumbled at the Protestant statesmen whom she called to her council-board. But to Elizabeth the arrangement was the most natural thing in the world. She looked at theological differences in a purely political light. She agreed with Henry the Fourth that a kingdom was well worth a Mass. It seemed an obvious thing to her to hold out hopes of conversion as a means of deceiving Philip, or to gain a point in negotiation by restoring the crucifix to her chapel. The first interest in her own mind was the interest of public order, and she never could understand how it could fail to be first in every one's mind. Her ingenuity set itself to construct a system in which ecclesiastical unity should not jar against the rights of conscience; a compromise which merely required outer "conformity" to the established worship while, as she was never weary of repeating, it "left opinion free." She fell back from the very first on the system of Henry the Eighth. "I will do," she told the Spanish ambassador, "as my father did." She opened negotiations with the papal see, till the pope's summons to submit her claim of succession to the judgment of Rome made compromise impossible. The first work of her Parliament was to declare her legitimacy and title to the Crown, to restore the royal supremacy, and to abjure all foreign authority and jurisdiction. At her entry into London Elizabeth kissed the English Bible which the citizens presented to her and promised "diligently to read therein." Further she had no personal wish to go. A third of the council and at least two thirds of the people were as opposed to any radical changes in religion as the queen. Among the gentry the older and wealthier were on the conservative side, and only the younger and meaner on the other. But it was soon necessary to go further. If the Protestants were the less numerous, they were the abler and the more vigorous party; and the exiles who returned from Geneva brought with them a fiercer hatred of Catholicism. To every Protestant the Mass was identified with the fires of Smithfield, while Edward's prayer-book was hallowed by the memories of the Martyrs. But if Elizabeth won the Protestants by an Act of Uniformity which restored the English prayer-book and enforced its use on the clergy on pain of

deprivation, the alterations she made in its language showed her wish to conciliate the Catholics as far as possible. She had no mind merely to restore the system of the Protectorate. She dropped the words "head of the Church" from the royal title. The forty-two Articles which Cranmer had drawn up were left in abeyance. If Elizabeth had had her will, she would have retained the celibacy of the clergy and restored the use of crucifixes in the churches. In part, indeed, of her effort she was foiled by the increased bitterness of the reformers. The London mob tore down the crosses in the streets. Her attempt to retain the crucifix or enforce the celibacy of the priesthood fell dead before the opposition of the Protestant clergy. On the other hand, the Marian bishops, with a single exception, discerned the Protestant drift of the changes she was making, and bore imprisonment and deprivation rather than accept the oath required by the Act of Supremacy. But to the mass of the nation the compromise of Elizabeth seems to have been fairly acceptable. The bulk of the clergy, if they did not take the oath, practically submitted to the Act of Supremacy and adopted the prayer-book. Of the few who openly refused only two hundred were deprived, and many went unharmed. No marked repugnance to the new worship was shown by the people at large; and Elizabeth was able to turn from questions of belief to the question of order.

She found in Matthew Parker, whom Pole's death enabled her to raise to the see of Canterbury, an agent in the reorganization of the Church whose patience and moderation were akin to her own. Theologically the primate was a moderate man, but he was resolute to restore order in the discipline and worship of the Church. The whole machinery of English religion had been thrown out of gear by the rapid and radical changes of the past two reigns. The majority of the parish priests were still Catholic in heart; sometimes Mass was celebrated at the parsonage for the more rigid Catholics, and the new communion in church for the more rigid Protestants. Sometimes both parties knelt together at the same altar-rails, the one to receive hosts consecrated by the priest at home after the old usage, the other wafers consecrated in church after the new. In many parishes of the north no

change of service was made at all. On the other hand, the new Protestant clergy were often unpopular, and roused the disgust of the people by their violence and greed. Chapters plundered their own estates by leases and fines and by felling timber. The marriages of the clergy became a scandal, which was increased when the gorgeous vestments of the old worship were cut up into gowns and bodices for the priests' wives. The new services sometimes turned into scenes of utter disorder where the clergy wore what dress they pleased and the communicant stood or sat as he liked; while the old altars were broken down and the communion table was often a bare board upon trestles. The people, naturally enough, were found to be "utterly devoid of religion," and came to church "as to a May game." To the difficulties which Parker found in the temper of the reformers and their opponents new difficulties were added by the freaks of the queen. If she had no convictions, she had tastes; and her taste revolted from the bareness of Protestant ritual and above all from the marriage of priests. "Leave that alone," she shouted to Dean Nowell from the royal closet as he denounced the use of images — "stick to your text, Master Dean, leave that alone!" When Parker was firm in resisting the introduction of the crucifix or of celibacy, Elizabeth showed her resentment at his firmness by an insult to his wife. Married ladies were addressed at this time as "Madam," unmarried ladies as "Mistress"; and when Mrs. Parker advanced at the close of a sumptuous entertainment at Lambeth to take leave of the queen, Elizabeth feigned a momentary hesitation. "Madam," she said at last, "I may not call you, and Mistress I am loth to call you; however, I thank you for your good cheer." To the end of her reign indeed Elizabeth remained as bold a plunderer of the wealth of the bishops as either of her predecessors, and carved out rewards for her ministers from the Church lands with a queenly disregard of the rights of property. Lord Burleigh built up the estate of the House of Cecil out of the demesnes of the see of Peterborough. The neighborhood of Hatton Garden to Ely Place recalls the spoliation of another bishopric in favor of the queen's sprightly chancellor. Her reply to the bishop's protest against this robbery showed what Elizabeth meant by her ecclesiastical

supremacy. "Proud prelate," she wrote, "you know what you were before I made you what you are! If you do not immediately comply with my request, by God I will unfrock you." But freaks of this sort had little real influence beside the steady support which the queen gave to the primate in his work of order. She suffered no plunder save her own, and she was earnest for the restoration of order and decency in the outer arrangements of the Church. The vacant sees were filled for the most part with learned and able men; and England seemed to settle quietly down in a religious peace.

The settlement of religion, however, was not the only pressing care which met Elizabeth as she mounted the throne. The country was drained by war; yet she could only free herself from war, and from the dependence on Spain which it involved, by acquiescing in the loss of Calais. But though peace was won by the sacrifice, France remained openly hostile; the Dauphin and his wife, Mary Stuart, had assumed the arms and style of king and queen of England; and their pretensions became a source of immediate danger through the presence of a French army in Scotland. To understand, however, what had taken place there, we must cursorily review the past history of the northern kingdom. From the moment when England finally abandoned the fruitless effort to subdue it the story of Scotland had been a miserable one. Whatever peace might be concluded, a sleepless dread of the old danger from the south tied the country to an alliance with France, which dragged it into the vortex of the Hundred Years' war. But after the final defeat and capture of David in the field of Neville's Cross the struggle died down on both sides into marauding forays and battles, like those of Otterburn and Homildon Hill, in which alternate victories were won by the feudal lords of the Scotch or English border. The ballad of "Chevy Chase" brings home to us the spirit of the contest, the daring and defiance which stirred Sidney's heart "more than with a trumpet." But its effect on the internal development of Scotland was utterly ruinous. The houses of Douglas and of March which it raised into supremacy only interrupted their strife with England to battle fiercely with one another or to coerce their king. The power of the Crown sank in fact into insignificance under the ear-

lier sovereigns of the line of Stuart which had succeeded to the throne on the extinction of the male line of Bruce. Invasions and civil feuds not only arrested but even rolled back the national industry and prosperity. The country was a chaos of disorder and misrule, in which the peasant and the trader were the victims of feudal outrage. The border became a lawless land, where robbery and violence reigned utterly without check. So pitiable seemed the state of the kingdom that the clans of the Highlands drew together at last to swoop upon it as a certain prey; but the common peril united the factions of the nobles, and the victory of Harlaw saved the Lowlands from the rule of the Celt. A great name at last broke the line of the Scottish kings. Schooled by a long captivity in England, James the First returned to his realm to be the ablest of her rulers as he was the first of her poets. In the thirteen years of a short but wonderful reign justice and order were restored for a while, the Scotch Parliament organized, the clans of the Highlands assailed in their own fastnesses and reduced to swear fealty to the "Saxon" king. James turned to deal with the great houses, but feudal violence was still too strong for the hand of the law, and a band of ruffians who burst into the royal chamber left the king lifeless with sixteen stabs in his body. His death was the signal for a struggle between the House of Douglas and the Crown, which lasted through half a century. Order, however, crept gradually in; the exile of the Douglases left the Scottish monarchs supreme in the Lowlands; while their dominion over the Highlands was secured by the ruin of the Lords of the Isles. But in its outer policy the country still followed in the wake of France; every quarrel between French king and English king brought danger with it on the Scottish border; till Henry the Seventh bound England and Scotland together for a time by bestowing in 1502 the hand of his daughter Margaret on the Scottish king. The union was dissolved, however, by the strife with France which followed the accession of Henry the Eighth; war broke out anew, and the terrible defeat and death of James the Fourth at Flodden Field involved his realm in the turbulence and misrule of a minority. His successor James the Fifth, though nephew of the English king, from the outset of

his reign took up an attitude hostile to England; and Church and people were ready to aid in plunging the two countries into a fresh struggle. His defeat at Solway Moss brought the young king broken-hearted to his grave. "It came with a lass, and it will go with a lass," he cried, as they brought him on his death-bed the news of Mary Stuart's birth. The hand of his infant successor at once became the subject of rivalry between England and France. Had Mary, as Henry the Eighth desired, been wedded to Edward the Sixth, the whole destinies of Europe might have been changed by the union of the two realms; but the recent bloodshed had embittered Scotland, and the high-handed way in which Somerset pushed the marriage project completed the breach. Somerset's invasion and victory at Pinkie Cleugh only enabled Mary of Guise, the French wife of James the Fifth, who had become regent of the realm at his death, to induce the Scotch estates to consent to the union of her child with the heir of the French crown, the Dauphin Francis. From that moment, as we have seen, the claims of the Scottish queen on the English throne became so formidable a danger as to drive Mary Tudor to her marriage with Philip of Spain. But the danger became a still greater one on the accession of Elizabeth, whose legitimacy no Catholic acknowledged, and whose religious attitude tended to throw the Catholic party into her rival's hands.

In spite of the peace with France, therefore, Francis and Mary persisted in their pretensions; and a French force landed at Leith, with the connivance of Mary of Guise. The appearance of this force on the border was intended to bring about a Catholic rising. But the hostility between France and Spain bound Philip, for the moment, to the support of Elizabeth; and his influence over the Catholics secured quiet for a time. The queen, too, played with their hopes of a religious reaction by talk of her own reconciliation with the papacy and admission of a papal legate to the realm, and by plans for her marriage with an Austrian and Catholic prince. Meanwhile she parried the blow in Scotland itself, where the Reformation had begun rapidly to gain ground, by secretly encouraging the "Lords of the Congregation," as the nobles who headed the Protestant party were styled,

to rise against the regent. Since her accession Elizabeth's diplomacy had gained her a year, and her matchless activity had used the year to good purpose. Order was restored throughout England, the Church was reorganized, the debts of the Crown were in part paid off, the treasury was recruited, a navy created, and a force ready for action in the north, when the defeat of her Scotch adherents forced her at last to throw aside the mask. As yet she stood almost alone in her self-reliance. Spain believed her ruin to be certain; France despised her chances; her very council was in despair. The one minister in whom she dared to confide was Cecil, the youngest and boldest of her advisers, and even Cecil trembled for her success. But lies and hesitation were no sooner put aside than the queen's vigor and tenacity came fairly into play. At a moment when D'Oysel, the French commander, was on the point of crushing the Lords of the Congregation, an English fleet appeared suddenly in the Forth and forced the regent's army to fall back upon Leith. The queen made a formal treaty with the Lords, and promised to assist them in the expulsion of the strangers. France was torn by internal strife, and could send neither money nor men. In March, Lord Grey moved over the border with 8000 men to join the Lords of the Congregation in the siege of Leith. The Scots indeed gave little aid; and an assault on the town signally failed. Philip, too, in a sudden jealousy of Elizabeth's growing strength demanded the abandonment of the enterprise. But Elizabeth was immovable. Famine did its work better than the sword; and in two treaties with the Scotch and English, the envoys of Francis and Mary at last promised to withdraw the French, and leave the government to a Council of the Lords, and acknowledged Elizabeth's title to her throne. A Scotch Parliament at once declared Calvinism the national religion. Both act and treaty indeed were set aside by Francis and Mary, but Elizabeth's policy had in fact broken the dependence of Scotland on France, and bound to her side the strongest and most vigorous party among its nobles.

Section IV. — England and Mary Stuart, 1560–1572

The issue of the Scotch war revealed suddenly to Europe the vigor of Elizabeth and the real strength of her throne. She had freed herself from the control of Philip, she had defied France, she had averted the danger from the north by the creation of an English party among the nobles of Scotland. The same use of religious divisions gave her a similar check on the hostility of France. The Huguenots, as the French Protestants were called, had become a formidable party under the guidance of the Admiral Coligni, and the defeat of their rising against the family of the Guises, who stood at the head of the French Catholics and were supreme at the court of Francis and Mary, threw them on the support and alliance of Elizabeth. But if the decisive outbreak of the great religious struggle, so long looked for between the Old Faith and the New, gave Elizabeth strength abroad, it weakened her at home. Her Catholic subjects lost all hope of her conversion as they saw the queen allying herself with Scotch Calvinists and French Huguenots; her hopes of a religious compromise in matters of worship were broken by the issue of a papal brief which forbade attendance at the English service; and Philip of Spain, freed like herself from the fear of France by its religious divisions, had less reason to hold the English Catholics in check. He was preparing, in fact, to take a new political stand as the patron of Catholicism throughout the world; and his troops were directed to support the Guises in the civil war which broke out after the death of Francis the Second, and to attack the heretics wherever they might find them. "Religion," he told Elizabeth, "was being made a cloak for anarchy and revolution." It was at the moment when the last hopes of the English Catholics were dispelled by the queen's refusal to take part in the Council of Trent that Mary Stuart, whom the death of her husband had left a stranger in France, landed at Leith. Girl as she was, and she was only nineteen, she was hardly inferior in intellectual power to Elizabeth herself, while in fire and grace and brilliancy of temper she stood high above her. She brought with her the voluptuous refinement of the French Renascence: she would lounge for

days in bed, and rise only at night for dances and music. But her frame was of iron, and incapable of fatigue; she galloped ninety miles after her last defeat without a pause save to change horses. She loved risk and adventure and the ring of arms; as she rode in a foray to the north, the grim swordsmen beside her heard her wish she was a man, "to know what life it was to lie all night in the fields, or to walk on the cawsey with a Glasgow buckler and a broadsword." But in the closet she was as cool and astute a politician as Elizabeth herself; with plans as subtle, but of a far wider and grander range than the queen's. "Whatever policy is in all the chief and best-practised heads of France," wrote an English envoy, "whatever craft, falsehood, and deceit is in all the subtle brains of Scotland, is either fresh in this woman's memory, or she can fetch it out with a wet finger." Her beauty, her exquisite grace of manner, her generosity of temper and warmth of affection, her frankness of speech, her sensibility, her gaiety, her womanly tears, her manlike courage, the play and freedom of her nature, the flashes of poetry that broke from her at every intense moment of her life, flung a spell over friend or foe which has only deepened with the lapse of years. Even to Knollys, the sternest Puritan of his day, she seemed in her captivity to be "a notable woman." "She seemeth to regard no ceremonious honor besides the acknowledgment of her estate royal. She showeth a disposition to speak much, to be bold, to be pleasant, to be very familiar. She showeth a great desire to be avenged on her enemies. She showeth a readiness to expose herself to all perils in hope of victory. She desireth much to hear of hardiness and valiancy, commending by name all approved hardy men of her country though they be her enemies, and she concealeth no cowardice even in her friends." As yet men knew nothing of the stern bigotry, the intensity of passion, which lay beneath the winning surface of Mary's womanhood. But they at once recognized her political ability. She had seized eagerly on the new strength which was given her by her husband's death. Her cause was no longer hampered, either in Scotland or in England, by a national jealousy of French interference. It was with a resolve to break the league between Elizabeth and the Scotch Protes-

tants, to unite her own realm around her, and thus to give a firm base for her intrigues among the English Catholics, that Mary landed at Leith. The effect of her presence was marvelous. Her personal fascination revived the national loyalty and swept all Scotland to her feet. Knox, the greatest and sternest of the Calvinistic preachers, alone withstood the spell. The rough Scotch nobles owned that there was in Mary "some enchantment whereby men are bewitched." A promise of religious toleration united her subjects in support of the claim which she advanced to be named Elizabeth's successor. But the question of the succession, like the question of her marriage, was with Elizabeth a question of life and death. Her wedding with a Catholic or a Protestant suitor would have been equally the end of her system of balance and national union, a signal for the revolt of the party which she disappointed and for the triumphant dictation of the party which she satisfied. "If a Catholic prince come here," a Spanish ambassador wrote while pressing an Austrian marriage, "the first Mass he attends will be the signal for a revolt." It was so with the question of the succession. To name a Protestant successor from the House of Suffolk would have driven every Catholic to insurrection. To name Mary was to stir Protestantism to a rising of despair, and to leave Elizabeth at the mercy of every fanatical assassin who wished to clear the way for a Catholic ruler. "I am not so foolish," was the queen's reply to Mary, "as to hang a winding sheet before my eyes."

But the pressure on her was great, and Mary looked to the triumph of Catholicism in France to increase the pressure. It was this which drove Elizabeth to listen to the cry of the Huguenots at the moment when they were yielding to the strength of the Guises. Hate war as she might, the instinct of self-preservation dragged her into the great struggle; and in spite of the menaces of Philip, money and six thousand men were promised to the aid of the Protestants under Condé. But a fatal overthrow of the Huguenot army at Dreux left the Guises masters of France, and brought the danger to the very doors of England. The hopes of the English Catholics rose higher. Though the pope delayed to issue his bull of deposition, a papal brief pronounced joining in the Common

Prayer schismatic, and forbade the attendance of Catholics at church. With the issue of this brief the conformity of worship which Elizabeth had sought to establish came to an end. The hotter Catholics withdrew from church. Heavy fines were laid on them as recusants; fines which, as their numbers increased, became a valuable source of supply for the Exchequer. But no fines could compensate for the moral blow which their withdrawal dealt. It was the beginning of a struggle which Elizabeth had averted through three memorable years. Protestant fanaticism met Catholic fanaticism. The tidings of Dreux spread panic through the realm. Parliament showed its terror by measures of a new severity. "There has been enough of words," said the queen's minister, Sir Francis Knollys; "it were time to draw sword." The sword was drawn in a Test Act, the first in a series of penal statutes which weighed upon English Catholics for two hundred years. By this statute an oath of allegiance to the queen and abjuration of the temporal authority of the pope was exacted from all holders of office, lay or spiritual, with the exception of peers. Its effect was to place the whole power of the realm in the hands either of Protestants, or of Catholics who accepted Elizabeth's legitimacy and her ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the teeth of the papacy. Caution indeed was used in applying this test to the laity, but pressure was more roughly put on the clergy. Many of the parish priests, though they had submitted to the use of the prayer-book, had not taken the oath prescribed by the Act of Uniformity. As yet Elizabeth had cautiously refused to allow any strict inquiry into their opinions. But a commission was now opened by her order at Lambeth, with the primate at its head, to enforce the act, while thirty-nine of the Articles drawn up under Edward were adopted as a standard of faith, and acceptance of them demanded of the clergy.

It is possible that Elizabeth might have clung to her older policy of conciliation had she foreseen how suddenly the danger that appalled her was to pass away. At this crisis she was able, as usual, to "count on Fortune." The assassination of the Duke of Guise broke up his party; a policy of moderation and balance prevailed at the French court; Catherine of Medicis was now supreme, and her aim was still an

aim of peace. The queen's good luck was checkered by a merited humiliation. She had sold her aid to the Huguenots in their hour of distress at the price of the surrender of Havre, and Havre was again wrested from her by the reunion of the French parties. Peace with France in the following spring secured her a year's respite in her anxieties; and Mary was utterly foiled in her plan for bringing the pressure of a united Scotland, backed by France, to bear upon her rival. But the defeat only threw her on a yet more formidable scheme. She was weary of the mask of religious indifference which her policy had forced her to wear with the view of securing the general support of her subjects. She resolved now to appeal to the English Catholics on the ground of Catholicism. Next to the Scottish queen in the line of blood stood Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, a son of the Countess of Lennox, and grandson of Margaret Tudor by her second marriage with the Earl of Angus, as Mary was her grandchild by Margaret's first marriage with James the Fourth. Though the House of Lennox conformed to the new system of English worship, its sympathies were known to be Catholic, and the hopes of the Catholics wrapped themselves round its heir. It was by a match with Henry Stuart that Mary now determined to unite the forces of Catholicism. The match was regarded on all sides as a challenge to Protestantism. Philip had till now looked upon Mary's system of toleration and on her hopes from France with equal suspicion. But he now drew slowly to her side. "She is the one gate," he owned, "through which Religion can be restored in England. All the rest are closed." It was in vain that Elizabeth strove to prevent the marriage by a threat of war, or by secret plots for the seizure of Mary and the driving of Darnley back over the border. The Lords of the Congregation woke with a start from their confidence in the queen, and her half-brother, Lord James Stuart, better known as Earl of Murray, mustered his Protestant confederates. But their revolt was hardly declared when Mary marched on them with pistols in her belt, and drove their leaders helplessly over the border. A rumor spread that she was in league with Spain and with France, where the influences of the Guises was again strong. Elizabeth took refuge in the meanest dissimulation, while the an-

nouncement of Mary's pregnancy soon gave her a strength which swept aside Philip's counsels of caution and delay. "With the help of God and of your Holiness," Mary wrote to the pope, "I will leap over the wall." Rizzio, an Italian who had counseled the marriage, still remained her adviser, and the daring advice he gave fell in with her natural temper. She demanded a recognition of her succession. She resolved in the coming Parliament to restore Catholicism in Scotland, and to secure the banishment of Murray and his companions. The English Catholics of the north were ready to revolt as soon as she was ready to aid them. No such danger had ever threatened Elizabeth as this, but again she could "trust to Fortune." Mary had staked all on her union with Darnley, and yet only a few months had passed since her wedding day when men saw that she "hated the king." The boy turned out a dissolute, insolent husband; and Mary's scornful refusal of his claim of the "crown matrimonial," a refusal which Darnley attributed to Rizzio's counsels, drove his jealousy to madness. At the very moment when the queen revealed the extent of her schemes by her dismissal of the English ambassador, the young king, followed by his kindred the Douglases, burst into her chamber, dragged Rizzio from her presence, and stabbed him brutally in an outer chamber. The darker features of Mary's character were now to develop themselves. Darnley, keen as was her thirst for vengeance on him, was needful to the triumph of her political aims. She masked her hatred beneath a show of affection, which succeeded in severing the wretched boy from his fellow conspirators and in gaining his help in an escape to Dunbar. Once free, she marched in triumph on Edinburgh at the head of eight thousand men under the Earl of Bothwell, while Morton, Ruthven, and Lindesay fled in terror over the border. With wise dissimulation, however, she fell back on her system of religious toleration. But her intrigues with the English Catholics were never interrupted, and her court was full of refugees from the northern counties. "Your actions," Elizabeth wrote in a sudden break of fierce candor, "are as full of venom as your words are of honey." The birth of her child, the future James the Sixth of Scotland and First of England, doubled Mary's strength. "Your friends

are so increased," her ambassador wrote to her from England, "that many whole shires are ready to rebel, and their captains named by election of the nobility." The anxiety of the English Parliament which met at this crisis proved that the danger was felt to be real. The Houses saw but one way of providing against it, and they renewed their appeal for the queen's marriage and for a settlement of the succession. As we have seen, both of these measures involved even greater dangers than they averted; but Elizabeth stood alone in her resistance to them. To settle the succession was at once to draw the sword. The queen therefore on this point stood firm. The promise to marry, which she gave after a furious burst of anger, she was no doubt resolved to evade as she had evaded it before. But the quarrel with the Commons which followed on her prohibition of any debate on the succession, a quarrel to which we shall recur at a later time, hit Elizabeth hard. It was "secret foes at home," she told the Commons as their quarrel passed away in a warm reconciliation, "who thought to work me that mischief which never foreign enemies could bring to pass, which is the hatred of my Commons. Do you think that either I am so unmindful of your surety by succession, wherein is all my care, or that I went about to break your liberties? No! it never was my meaning, but to stay you before you fell into the ditch." It was impossible for her, however, to explain the real reasons for her course, and the dissolution of the Parliament left her face to face with a national discontent added to the ever-deepening peril from without.

One terrible event suddenly struck light through the gathering clouds. Mary had used Darnley as a tool to effect the ruin of his confederates and to further her policy, but since his share in Rizzio's murder she had loathed and avoided him. Ominous words dropped from her lips. "Unless she were freed of him some way," she said, "she had no pleasure to live." Her purpose of vengeance was quickened by her passion for the Earl of Bothwell, the boldest and most unscrupulous of the border nobles. The earl's desperate temper shrank from no obstacles to a union with the queen. Divorce would free him from his own wife. Darnley might be struck down by a conspiracy of the Lords whom he had

deserted and betrayed, and who still looked on him as their bitterest foe. The exiled nobles were recalled; there were dark whispers among the Lords. The terrible secret of the deed which followed is still wrapped in a cloud of doubt and mystery which will probably never be wholly dispelled. The queen's mood seemed suddenly to change. Her hatred to Darnley passed all at once into demonstrations of the old affection. He had fallen sick with vice and misery, and she visited him on his sick-bed, and persuaded him to follow her to Edinburgh. She visited him again in a ruinous and lonely house near the palace, in which he was lodged by her order, kissed him as she bade him farewell, and rode gaily back to a wedding-dance at Holyrood. Two hours after midnight an awful explosion shook the city; and the burghers rushed out from the gates to find the house of Kirk o' Field destroyed, and Darnley's body dead beside the ruins. The murder was undoubtedly the deed of Bothwell. His servant, it was soon known, had stored the powder beneath the king's bedchamber, and the earl had watched without the walls till the deed was done. But, in spite of gathering suspicion and of a charge of murder made formally against him by Lord Lennox, no serious steps were taken to investigate the crime; and a rumor that Mary purposed to marry the murderer drove her friends to despair. Her agent in England wrote to her that "if she married that man she would lose the favor of God, her own reputation, and the hearts of all England, Ireland, and Scotland." But every stronghold in the kingdom was soon placed in Bothwell's hands, and this step was the prelude to a trial and acquittal which the overwhelming force of his followers in Edinburgh turned into a bitter mockery. A shameless suit for his divorce removed the last obstacle to his ambition; and a seizure of the queen as she rode to Linlithgow was followed by a marriage. In a month more all was over. The horror at such a marriage with a man fresh from her husband's blood drove the whole nation to revolt. Its nobles, Catholic as well as Protestant, gathered in arms at Stirling; and their entrance into Edinburgh roused the capital into insurrection. Mary and the earl advanced with a fair force to Seton to encounter the Lords; but their men refused to fight, and Bothwell galloped off into lifelong exile, while

the queen was brought back to Edinburgh in a frenzy of despair, tossing back wild words of defiance to the curses of the crowd. From Edinburgh she was carried a prisoner to the fortress of Lochleven; as the price of her life she was forced to resign her crown in favor of her child, and to name her brother, the Earl of Murray, who was now returning from France, as regent. In July the babe was solemnly crowned as James the Sixth.

For the moment England was saved, but the ruin of Mary's hopes had not come one instant too soon. The great conflict between the two religions, which had begun in France, was slowly widening into a general struggle over the whole face of Europe. For four years the balanced policy of Catherine of Medicis had wrested a truce from both Catholics and Huguenots, but Condé and the Guises again rose in arms, each side eager to find its profit in the new troubles which now broke out in Flanders. For the long persecution of the Protestants there, and the unscrupulous invasion of the constitutional liberties of the provinces by Philip of Spain, had at last stirred the Netherlands to revolt; and the insurrection was seized by Philip as a pretext for dealing a blow he had long meditated at the growing heresy of this portion of his dominions. At the moment when Mary entered Lochleven, the Duke of Alva was starting with an army of ten thousand men on his march to the Low Countries; and with his easy triumph over their insurgent forces began the terrible series of outrages and massacres which have made his name infamous in history. No event could be more embarrassing to Elizabeth than the arrival of Alva in Flanders. His extirpation of heresy there would prove the prelude for his cooperation with the Guises in the extirpation of heresy in France. Without counting, too, this future danger, the triumph of Catholicism and the presence of a Catholic army in a country so closely connected with England at once revived the dreams of a Catholic rising against her throne; while the news of Alva's massacres stirred in every one of her Protestant subjects a thirst for revenge which it was hard to hold in check. Yet to strike a blow at Alva was impossible, for Antwerp was the great mart of English trade, and a stoppage of the trade with Flanders, such as war would bring about, would have

broken half the merchants in London. Every day was deepening the perplexities of Elizabeth, when Mary succeeded in making her escape from Lochleven. Defeated at Langside, where the energy of Murray promptly crushed the rising of the Catholic nobles in her support, she abandoned all hope of Scotland; and changing her designs with the rapidity of genius, she pushed in a light boat across the Solway, and was safe before evening fell in the castle of Carlisle. The presence of Alva in Flanders was a far less peril than the presence of Mary in Carlisle. To retain her in England was to furnish a center for revolt; Mary herself indeed threatened that "if they kept her prisoner they should have enough to do with her." Her ostensible demand was for English aid in her restoration to the throne, or for a free passage to France; but compliance with the last request would have given the Guises a terrible weapon against Elizabeth and have insured a new French intervention in Scotland, while to restore her by arms to the crown she had lost was impossible. Till Mary was cleared of guilt, Murray would hear nothing of her return, and Mary refused to submit to such a trial as would clear her. So eager, however, was Elizabeth to get rid of the pressing peril of her presence in England, that Mary's refusal to submit to any trial only drove her to fresh devices for her restoration. She urged upon Murray the suppression of the graver charges, and upon Mary the leaving Murray in actual possession of the royal power as the price of her return. Neither however would listen to terms which sacrificed both to Elizabeth's self-interest; the regent persisted in charging the queen with murder and adultery, while Mary refused either to answer or to abdicate in favor of her infant son. The triumph indeed of her bold policy was best advanced, as the Queen of Scots had no doubt foreseen, by simple inaction. Her misfortunes, her resolute denials, were gradually wiping away the stain of her guilt, and winning back the Catholics of England to her cause. Elizabeth "had the wolf by the ears," while the fierce contest which Alva's presence roused in the Netherlands and in France was firing the temper of the two great parties in England.

In the court, as in the country, the forces of progress and of resistance stood at last in sharp and declared opposition to

each other. Cecil at the head of the Protestants demanded a general alliance with the Protestant Churches throughout Europe, a war in the Low Countries against Alva, and the unconditional surrender of Mary to her Scotch subjects for the punishment she deserved. The Catholics on the other hand, backed by the mass of the Conservative party with the Duke of Norfolk at its head, and supported by the wealthier merchants, who dreaded the ruin of the Flemish trade, were as earnest in demanding the dismissal of Cecil and the Protestants from the council-board, a steady peace with Spain, and, though less openly, a recognition of Mary's succession. Elizabeth was driven to temporize as before. She refused Cecil's counsels; but she sent money and arms to Condé, and hampered Alva by seizing treasure on its way to him, and by pushing the quarrel even to a temporary embargo on shipping either side the sea. She refused the counsels of Norfolk; but she would hear nothing of a declaration of war, or give any judgment on the charges against the Scottish queen, or recognize the accession of James in her stead. The effect of Mary's presence in England was seen in conspiracies of Norfolk with the northern earls and with Spain. Elizabeth, roused to her danger, struck quick and hard. Mary Stuart was given in charge to Lord Huntingdon. Arundel, Pembroke, and Lumley were secured, and Norfolk sent to the Tower. But the disasters of the Huguenots in France, and the news brought by a papal envoy that a bull of deposition against Elizabeth was ready at Rome, goaded the great Catholic lords to action, and brought about the rising of the houses of Neville and of Percy. The entry of the earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland into Durham proved the signal for revolt. The Bible and prayer-book were torn to pieces, and Mass said once more at the altar of Durham Cathedral, before the earls pushed on to Doncaster with an army that soon swelled to thousands of men. Their cry was "to reduce all causes of religion to the old custom and usage"; and the Earl of Sussex, her general in the north, wrote frankly to Elizabeth that "there were not ten gentlemen in Yorkshire that did allow [approve] her proceedings in the cause of religion." But he was as loyal as he was frank, and held York stoutly while the queen ordered Mary's hasty removal to a

new prison at Coventry. The storm however broke as rapidly as it had gathered. The mass of the Catholics throughout the country made no sign; and the earls no sooner halted irresolute in presence of this unexpected inaction than their army caught the panic and dispersed. Northumberland and Westmoreland fled, and were followed in their flight by Leonard Dacres of Naworth, while their miserable adherents paid for their disloyalty in bloodshed and ruin. The ruthless measures of repression which closed this revolt were the first breach in the clemency of Elizabeth's rule. But they were signs of terror which were not lost on her opponents. It was the general inaction of the Catholics which had foiled the hopes of the northern earls; and Rome now did its best to stir them to activity by publishing the bull of excommunication and deposition against the Queen, which had been secretly issued in the preceding year, and was found nailed in a spirit of ironical defiance on the Bishop of London's door. The Catholics of the north withdrew stubbornly from the national worship. Everywhere the number of recusants increased. Intrigues were busier than ever. The Regent Murray was assassinated, and Scotland plunged into war between the adherents of Mary and those of her son. From the defeated Catholics Mary turned again to the Duke of Norfolk, who stood at the head of the Conservative peers. Norfolk had acquiesced in the religious compromise of the queen, and professed himself a Protestant while he intrigued with the Catholic party. He trusted to carry the English nobles with him in pressing for his marriage with Mary, a marriage which should seem to take her out of the hands of French and Catholic intriguers, to make her an Englishwoman, and to settle the vexed question of the succession to the throne. His dreams of such a union with Mary in the preceding year had been detected by Cecil, and checked by a short sojourn in the Tower; but his correspondence with the queen was renewed on his release, and ended in an appeal to Philip for the intervention of a Spanish army. At the head of this appeal stood the name of Mary; while Norfolk's name was followed by those of many lords of "the old blood," as the prouder peers styled themselves; and the significance of the request was heightened by gatherings of Catholic refugees

at Antwerp round the fugitive leaders of the Northern Revolt. Enough of these conspiracies was discovered to rouse a fresh ardor in the menaced Protestants. The Parliament met to pass an act of attainder against the northern earls, and to declare the introduction of papal bulls into the country an act of high treason. The rising indignation against Mary, as "the Daughter of Debate, who discord fell doth sow," was shown in a statute which declared any person who laid claim to the Crown during the queen's lifetime incapable of ever succeeding to it. The disaffection of the Catholics was met by imposing on all magistrates and public officers the obligation of subscribing to the Articles of Faith, a measure which in fact transferred the administration of justice and public order to their Protestant opponents. Meanwhile Norfolk's treason ripened into an elaborate plot. Philip had promised aid should the revolt actually break out; but the clue to these negotiations had long been in Cecil's hands, and before a single step could be taken towards the practical realization of his schemes of ambition, they were foiled by Norfolk's arrest. With his death and that of Northumberland, who followed him to the scaffold, the dread of revolt within the realm which had so long hung over England passed quietly away. The failure of the two attempts not only showed the weakness and disunion of the party of discontent and reaction, but it revealed the weakness of all party feeling before the rise of a national temper which was springing naturally out of the peace of Elizabeth's reign, and which a growing sense of danger to the order and prosperity around it was fast turning into a passionate loyalty to the queen. It was not merely against Cecil's watchfulness or Elizabeth's cunning that Mary and Philip and the Percies dashed themselves in vain; it was against a new England.

Section V. — The England of Elizabeth

"I have desired," Elizabeth said proudly to her Parliament, "to have the obedience of my subjects by love, and not by compulsion." It was a love fairly won by justice and good government. Buried as she seemed in foreign negotiations and intrigues, Elizabeth was above all an Eng-

lish sovereign. She devoted herself ably and energetically to the task of civil administration. At the first moment of relief from the pressure of outer troubles, she faced the two main causes of internal disorder. The debasement of the coinage was brought to an end in 1560. In 1561 a commission was issued to inquire into the best means of facing the problem of social discontent. Time, and the natural development of new branches of industry, were working quietly for the relief of the glutted labor market; but a vast mass of disorder still existed in England, which found a constant ground of resentment in the enclosures and evictions which accompanied the progress of agricultural change. It was on this host of "broken men" that every rebellion could count for support; their mere existence indeed was an encouragement to civil war; while in peace their presence was felt in the insecurity of life and property, in gangs of marauders which held whole counties in terror, and in "sturdy beggars" who stripped travelers on the road. Under Elizabeth, as under her predecessors, the terrible measures of repression, whose uselessness More had in vain pointed out, went pitilessly on: we find the magistrates of Somersetshire capturing a gang of a hundred at a stroke, hanging fifty at once on the gallows, and complaining bitterly to the council of the necessity for waiting till the assizes before they could enjoy the spectacle of the fifty others hanging beside them. But the government were dealing with the difficulty in a wiser and more effectual way. The old powers to enforce labor on the idle and settlement on the vagrant class were continued; and each town and parish was held responsible for the relief of its indigent and disabled poor, as well as for the employment of able-bodied mendicants. But a more efficient machinery was gradually devised for carrying out the relief and employment of the poor. Funds for this purpose had been provided by the collection of alms in church; but the mayor of each town and the churchwardens of each country parish were now directed to draw up lists of all inhabitants able to contribute to such a fund, and on a persistent refusal the justices in sessions were empowered to assess the offender at a fitting sum and to enforce its payment by imprisonment. The principles embodied in these measures, that of local responsibility

for local distress, and that of a distinction between the pauper and the vagabond, were more clearly defined in a statute of 1572. By this act the justices in the country districts and mayors and other officers in towns were directed to register the impotent poor, to settle them in fitting habitations, and to assess all inhabitants for their support. Overseers were appointed to enforce and superintend their labor, for which wool, hemp, flax, or other stuff was to be provided at the expense of the inhabitants; and houses of correction were established in every county for obstinate vagabonds or for paupers refusing to work at the overseer's bidding. A subsequent act transferred to these overseers the collection of the poor-rate, and powers were given to bind poor children as apprentices, to erect buildings for the improvident poor, and to force the parents and children of such paupers to maintain them. The well-known act which matured and finally established this system, the 43d of Elizabeth, remained the base of our system of pauper administration until a time within the recollection of living men. Whatever flaws a later experience has found in these measures, their wise and humane character formed a striking contrast to the legislation which had degraded our statute-book from the date of the Statute of Laborers; and their efficacy at the time was proved by the cessation of the social danger against which they were intended to provide.

Its cessation however was owing not merely to law, but to the natural growth of wealth and industry throughout the country. The change in the mode of cultivation, whatever social embarrassment it might bring about, undoubtedly favored production. Not only was a larger capital brought to bear upon the land, but the mere change in the system introduced a taste for new and better modes of agriculture; the breed of horses and of cattle was improved, and a far greater use made of manure and dressings. One acre under the new system produced, it was said, as much as two under the old. As a more careful and constant cultivation was introduced, a greater number of hands were required on every farm; and much of the surplus labor which had been flung off the land in the commencement of the new system was thus recalled to it. But a far more efficient agency in absorb-

ing the unemployed was found in the development of manufactures. The linen trade was as yet of small value, and that of silk weaving was only just introduced. But the woolen manufacture was fast becoming an important element in the national wealth. England no longer sent her fleeces to be woven in Flanders and to be dyed at Florence. The spinning of yarn, the weaving, fulling, and dyeing of cloth, was spreading rapidly from the towns over the countryside. The worsted trade, of which Norwich was the center, extended over the whole of the eastern counties. Farmers' wives began everywhere to spin their wool from their own sheeps' backs into a coarse "homespun." The south and the west, however, still remained the great seats of industry and of wealth, for they were the homes of mining and manufacturing activity. The iron manufactures were limited to Kent and Sussex, though their prosperity in this quarter was already threatened by the growing scarcity of the wood which fed their furnaces, and by the exhaustion of the forests of the Weald. Cornwall was then, as now, the sole exporter of tin; and the exportation of its copper was just beginning. The broadcloths of the west claimed the palm among the woolen stuffs of England. The Cinque Ports held almost a monopoly of the commerce of the Channel. Every little harbor from the Foreland to the Land's End sent out its fleet of fishing-boats, manned with the bold seamen who were to furnish crews for Drake and the buccaneers. But in the reign of Elizabeth the poverty and inaction to which the north had been doomed for so many centuries began at last to be broken. We see the first signs of the revolution which has transferred English manufactures and English wealth to the north of the Mersey and the Humber in the mention which now meets us of the friezes of Manchester, the coverlets of York, the cutlery of Sheffield, and the cloth trade of Halifax.

The growth, however, of English commerce far outstripped that of its manufactures. We must not judge of it, indeed, by any modern standard; for the whole population of the country can hardly have exceeded five or six millions, and the burden of all the vessels engaged in ordinary commerce was estimated at little more than fifty thousand tons. The size of the vessels employed in it would nowadays seem insignificant;

a modern collier brig is probably as large as the biggest merchant vessel which then sailed from the port of London. But it was under Elizabeth that English commerce began the rapid career of development which has made us the carriers of the world. The foundation of the Royal Exchange by Sir Thomas Gresham was a mark of the commercial progress of the time. By far the most important branch of our trade was with Flanders; Antwerp and Bruges were in fact the general marts of the world in the early part of the sixteenth century, and the annual export of English wool and drapery to their markets was estimated at a sum of more than two millions in value. It was with the ruin of Antwerp at the time of its siege and capture by the Duke of Parma that the commercial supremacy of our own capital was first established. A third of the merchants and manufacturers of the ruined city are said to have found a refuge on the banks of the Thames. The export trade to Flanders died away as London developed into the general mart of Europe, where the gold and sugar of the New World were found side by side with the cotton of India, the silks of the East, and the woolen stuffs of England itself. Not only was much of the old trade of the world transferred by this change to English shores, but the sudden burst of national vigor found new outlets for its activity. The Venetian carrying fleet still touched at Southampton; but as far back as the reign of Henry the Seventh a commercial treaty had been concluded with Florence, and the trade with the Mediterranean which had begun under Richard the Third constantly took a wider development. The trade between England and the Baltic ports had hitherto been concluded by the Hanseatic merchants; but the extinction at this time of their London depot, the Steel Yard, was a sign that this trade too had now passed into English hands. The growth of Boston and Hull marked an increase of commercial intercourse with Scandinavia. The prosperity of Bristol, which depended in great measure on the trade with Ireland, was stimulated by the conquest and colonization of that island at the close of the queen's reign and the beginning of her successor's. The dream of a northern passage to India opened up a trade with a land as yet unknown. Of three ships which sailed under Hugh Willoughby to realize

this dream, two were found afterwards frozen with their crews and their hapless commander on the coast of Lapland; but the third, under Richard Chancellor, made its way safely to the White Sea and by its discovery of Archangel created the trade with Russia. A more lucrative traffic had already begun with the coast of Guinea, to whose gold-dust and ivory the merchants of Southampton owed their wealth. The guilt of the slave-trade which sprang out of it rests with John Hawkins, whose arms (a demi-moor, proper, bound with a cord) commemorated his priority in the transport of negroes from Africa to the labor fields of the New World. The fisheries of the Channel and the German Ocean gave occupation to the numerous ports which lined the coast from Yarmouth to Plymouth Haven; Bristol and Chester were rivals in the fisheries of Ulster; and the voyage of Sebastian Cabot from the former port to the mainland of North America had called English vessels to the stormy ocean of the North. From the time of Henry the Eighth the number of English boats engaged on the cod banks of Newfoundland steadily increased, and at the close of Elizabeth's reign the seamen of Biscay found English rivals in the whale-fishery of the polar seas.

What Elizabeth contributed to this upgrowth of national prosperity was the peace and social order from which it sprang, and the thrift which spared the purses of her subjects by enabling her in ordinary times to content herself with the ordinary resources of the Crown. She lent, too, a ready patronage to the new commerce, she shared in its speculations, she considered its extension and protection as a part of public policy, and she sanctioned the formation of the great Merchant Companies which could then alone secure the trader against wrong or injustice in distant countries. The Merchant Adventurers of London, a body which had existed long before, and had received a charter of incorporation under Henry the Seventh, furnished a model for the Russian Company and the company which absorbed the new commerce to the Indies. But it was not wholly with satisfaction that either Elizabeth or her ministers watched the social change which wealth was producing around them. They feared the increased expenditure and comfort which necessarily followed it, as likely to impoverish the land and to eat

out the hardihood of the people. "England spendeth more on wines in one year," complained Cecil, "than it did in ancient times in four years." The disuse of salt fish and the greater consumption of meat marked the improvement which was taking place among the country folk. Their rough and wattled farmhouses were being superseded by dwellings of brick and stone. Pewter was replacing the wooden trenchers of the earlier yeomanry; there were yeomen who could boast of a fair show of silver plate. It is from this period indeed that we can first date the rise of a conception which seems to us now a peculiarly English one, the conception of domestic comfort. The chimney-corner, so closely associated with family life, came into existence with the general introduction of chimneys, a feature rare in ordinary houses at the beginning of this reign. Pillows, which had before been despised by the farmer and the trader as fit only "for women in childbed," were now in general use. Carpets superseded the filthy flooring of rushes. The lofty houses of the wealthier merchants, their parapeted fronts and costly wainscoting, their cumbrous but elaborate beds, their carved staircases, their quaintly figured gables, not only contrasted with the squalor which had till then characterized English towns, but marked the rise of a new middle class which was to play its part in later history. A transformation of an even more striking kind proclaimed the extinction of the feudal character of the noblesse. Gloomy walls and serried battlements disappeared from the dwellings of the gentry. The strength of the medieval fortress gave way to the pomp and grace of the Elizabethan hall. Knole, Longleat, Burleigh and Hatfield, Hardwick and Audley End, are familiar instances of the social as well as architectural change which covered England with buildings where the thought of defense was abandoned for that of domestic comfort and refinement. We still gaze with pleasure on their picturesque line of gables, their fretted fronts, their gilded turrets and fanciful vanes, their castellated gateways, the jutting oriels from which the great noble looked down on his new Italian garden, on its stately terraces and broad flights of steps, its vases and fountains, its quaint mazes, its formal walks, its lines of yews cut into grotesque shapes in hopeless rivalry of the cypress avenues

of the South. The Italian refinement of life which told on pleasance and garden told on the remodeling of the house within, raised the principal apartments to an upper floor, — a change to which we owe the grand staircases of the time, — surrounded the quiet courts by long "galleries of the presence," crowned the rude hearth with huge chimneypieces adorned with fauns and cupids, with quaintly interlaced monograms and fantastic arabesques, hung tapestries on the walls, and crowded each chamber with quaintly carved chairs and costly cabinets. The life of the Middle Ages concentrated itself in the vast castle hall, where the baron looked from his upper dais on the retainers who gathered at his board. But the great households were fast breaking up; and the whole feudal economy disappeared when the lord of the household withdrew with his family into his "parlor" or "withdrawing-room," and left the hall to his dependents. The prodigal use of glass became a marked feature in the domestic architecture of the time, and one whose influence on the general health of the people can hardly be overrated. Long lines of windows stretched over the fronts of the new manor halls. Every merchant's house had its oriel. "You shall have sometimes," Lord Bacon grumbled, "your houses so full of glass, that we cannot tell where to come to be out of the sun or the cold." But the prodigal enjoyment of light and sunshine was a mark of the temper of the age. The lavishness of a new wealth united with a lavishness of life, a love of beauty, of color, of display, to revolutionize English dress. The queen's three thousand robes were rivaled in their bravery by the slashed velvets, the ruffs, the jeweled purpoints of the courtiers around her. Men "wore a manor on their backs." The old sober notions of thrift melted before the strange revolutions of fortune wrought by the New World. Gallants gambled away a fortune at a sitting, and sailed off to make a fresh one in the Indies. Visions of galleons loaded to the brim with pearls and diamonds and ingots of silver, dreams of El Dorados where all was of gold, threw a haze of prodigality and profusion over the imagination of the meanest seaman. The wonders, too, of the New World kindled a burst of extravagant fancy in the Old. The strange medley of past and present which distinguishes its

masks and its feastings only reflected the medley of men's thoughts. Pedantry, novelty, the allegory of Italy, the chivalry of the Middle Ages, the mythology of Rome, the English bear fight, pastorals, superstition, farce, all took their turn in the entertainment which Lord Leicester provided for the queen at Kenilworth. A "wild man" from the Indies chanted her praises, and Echo answered him. Elizabeth turned from the greetings of sibyls and giants to deliver the enchanted lady from her tyrant "Sans Pitie." Shepherdesses welcomed her with carols of the spring, while Ceres and Bacchus poured their corn and grapes at her feet.

It was to this turmoil of men's minds, this wayward luxuriance and prodigality of fancy, that we owe the revival of English letters under Elizabeth. Here, as elsewhere, the Renascence found vernacular literature all but dead, poetry reduced to the doggerel of Skelton, history to the annals of Fabyan or Halle. It had, however, done little for English letters. The overpowering influence of the new models, both of thought and style, which it gave to the world in the writers of Greece and Rome, was at first felt only as a fresh check to the dreams of any revival of English poetry or prose. Though England shared more than any European country in the political and ecclesiastical results of the New Learning, its literary results were far less than in the rest of Europe, in Italy, or Germany, or France. More alone ranks among the great classical scholars of the sixteenth century. Classical learning indeed all but perished at the universities in the storm of the Reformation, nor did it revive there till the close of Elizabeth's reign. Insensibly, however, the influences of the Renascence fertilized the intellectual soil of England for the rich harvest that was to come. The court poetry which clustered round Wyatt and Surrey, exotic and imitative as it was, promised a new life for English verse. The growth of grammar-schools realized the dream of Sir Thomas More, and brought the middle classes, from the squire to the petty tradesman, into contact with the masters of Greece and Rome. The love of travel, which became so remarkable a characteristic of Elizabeth's day, quickened the intelligence of the wealthier nobles. "Home-keeping youths," says Shakspere in words that mark the time,

"have ever homely wits"; and a tour over the Continent was just becoming part of the education of a gentleman. Fairfax's version of Tasso, Harrington's version of Ariosto, were signs of the influence which the literature of Italy, the land to which travel led most frequently, exerted on English minds. The writers of Greece and Rome began at last to tell upon England when they were popularized by a crowd of translations. Chapman's noble version of Homer stands high above its fellows, but all the greater poets and historians of the classical world were turned into English before the close of the sixteenth century. It is characteristic of England that historical literature was the first to rise from its long death, though the form in which it rose marked the difference between the world in which it had perished and that in which it reappeared. During the Middle Ages the world had been without a past, save the shadowy and unknown past of early Rome; an annalist and chronicler told the story of the years which went before as a preface to his tale of the present without a sense of any difference between them. But the religious, social, and political change which had passed over England under the new Monarchy broke the continuity of its life; and the depth of the rift between the two ages is seen by the way in which History passes, on its revival under Elizabeth, from the medieval form of pure narrative to its modern form of an investigation and reconstruction of the past. The new interest which attached to the bygone world led to the collection of its annals, their reprinting and embodiment in an English shape. It was his desire to give the Elizabethan Church a basis in the past, as much as any pure zeal for letters, which induced Archbishop Parker to lead the way in the first of these labors. The collection of historical manuscripts which, following in the track of Leland, he rescued from the wreck of the monastic libraries created a school of antiquarian imitators, whose research and industry have preserved for us almost every work of permanent historical value which existed before the Dissolution of the Monasteries. To his publication of some of our earlier chronicles we owe the series of similar publications which bear the names of Camden, Twysden, and Gale. But as a branch of literature, English History in the new

shape which we have noted began in the work of the poet Daniel. The chronicles of Stowe and Speed, who preceded him, are simple records of the past, often copied almost literally from the annals they used, and utterly without style or arrangement; while Daniel, inaccurate and superficial as he is, gave his story a literary form and embodied it in a pure and graceful prose. Two larger works at the close of Elizabeth's reign, the "History of the Turks" by Knolles, and Raleigh's vast but unfinished plan of the "History of the World," showed the widening of historic interest beyond the merely national bounds to which it had hitherto been confined.

A far higher development of our literature sprang from the growing influence which Italy, as we have seen, was exerting, partly through travel and partly through its poetry and romances, on the manners and taste of the time. Men made more account of a story of Boccaccio's, it was said, than of a story from the Bible. The dress, the speech, the manners, of Italy became objects of almost passionate imitation, and of an imitation not always of the wisest or noblest kind. To Ascham it seemed like "the enchantment of Circe brought out of Italy to mar men's manners in England." "An Italianate Englishman," ran the harder proverb of Italy itself, "is an incarnate devil." The literary form which this imitation took seemed at any rate absurd. John Lyly, distinguished both as a dramatist and a poet, laid aside the tradition of English style for a style modeled on the decadence of Italian prose. Euphuism, as the new fashion has been styled from the prose romance of Euphues in which Lyly originated it, is best known to modern readers by the pitiless caricature in which Shakspere quizzed its pedantry, its affectation, the meaningless monotony of its far-fetched phrases, the absurdity of its extravagant conceits. Its representative, Armado in "Love's Labor's Lost," is "a man of fire-new words, fashion's own knight," "that hath a mint of phrases in his brain; one whom the music of his own vain tongue doth ravish like enchanting harmony." But its very extravagance sprang from the general burst of delight in the new resources of thought and language which literature felt to be at its disposal; and the new sense of literary beauty

which it disclosed in its affectation, in its love of a "mint of phrases" and the "music of its own vain tongue," the new sense of pleasure in delicacy or grandeur of phrase, in the structure and arrangement of sentences, in what has been termed the atmosphere of words, was a sense out of which style was itself to spring. For a time Euphuism had it all its own way. Elizabeth was the most affected and detestable of Euphuists; and "that beauty in court which could not parley Euphuism," a courtier of Charles the First's time tells us, "was as little regarded as she that now there speaks not French." The fashion however passed away, but the "Arcadia" of Sir Philip Sidney shows the wonderful advance which prose had made under its influence. Sidney, the nephew of Lord Leicester, was the idol of his time, and perhaps no figure reflects the age more fully and more beautifully. Fair as he was brave, quick of wit as of affection, noble and generous in temper, dear to Elizabeth as to Spenser, the darling of the court and of the camp, his learning and his genius made him the center of the literary world which was springing into birth on English soil. He had traveled in France and Italy, he was master alike of the older learning and of the new discoveries of astronomy. Bruno dedicated to him as to a friend his metaphysical speculations; he was familiar with the drama of Spain, the poems of Ronsard, the sonnets of Italy. He combined the wisdom of a grave councilor with the romantic chivalry of a knight errant. "I never heard the old story of Percy and Douglas," he says, "that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet." He flung away his life to save the English army in Flanders, and as he lay dying they brought a cup of water to his fevered lips. He bade them give it to a soldier who was stretched on the ground beside him. "Thy necessity," he said, "is greater than mine." The whole of Sidney's nature, his chivalry and his learning, his thirst for adventures, his tendency to extravagance, his freshness of tone, his tenderness and childlike simplicity of heart, his affectation and false sentiment, his keen sense of pleasure and delight, pours itself out in the pastoral medley, forced, tedious, and yet strangely beautiful, of his "Arcadia." In his "Defense of Poetry" the youthful exuberance of the

romancer has passed into the earnest vigor and grandiose stateliness of the rhetorician. But whether in the one work or the other, the flexibility, the music, the luminous clearness of Sidney's style remains the same. The quickness and vivacity of English prose, however, was first developed in the school of Italian imitators who appeared in Elizabeth's later years. The origin of English fiction is to be found in the tales and romances with which Greene and Nash crowded the market, models for which they found in the Italian novels. The brief form of these novelettes soon led to the appearance of the "pamphlet"; and a new world of readers was seen in the rapidity with which the stories or scurrilous libels which passed under this name were issued, and the greediness with which they were devoured. It was the boast of Greene that in the eight years before his death he had produced forty pamphlets. "In a night or a day would he have yarked up a pamphlet, as well as in seven years, and glad was that printer that might be blest to pay him dear for the very dregs of his wit." Modern eyes see less of the wit than of the dregs in the works of Greene and his compeers; but the attacks which Nash directed against the Puritans and his rivals were the first English works which shook utterly off the pedantry and extravagance of Euphuism. In his lightness, his facility, his vivacity, his directness of speech, we have the beginning of popular literature. It had descended from the closet to the street, and the very change implied that the street was ready to receive it. The abundance indeed of printers and of printed books at the close of the queen's reign shows that the world of readers and writers had widened far beyond the small circle of scholars and courtiers with which it began.

We shall have to review at a later time the great poetic burst for which this intellectual advance was paving the way, and the moral and religious change which was passing over the country through the progress of Puritanism. But both the intellectual and the religious impulses of the age united with the influence of its growing wealth to revive a spirit of independence in the nation at large, a spirit which it was impossible for Elizabeth to understand, but the strength of which her wonderful tact enabled her to feel. Long before

any open conflict arose between the people and the Crown, we see her instinctive perception of the changes which were going on round her in the modifications, conscious or unconscious, which she introduced into the system of the monarchy. Of its usurpations on English liberty she abandoned none. But she curtailed and softened down almost all. She tampered, as her predecessors had tampered, with personal freedom; there was the same straining of statutes and coercion of juries in political trials as before, and an arbitrary power of imprisonment was still exercised by the council. The duties she imposed on cloth and sweet wines were an assertion of her right of arbitrary taxation. Proclamations in council constantly assumed the force of law. In one part of her policy indeed Elizabeth seemed to fall back from the constitutional attitude assumed by the Tudor sovereigns. Ever since Cromwell's time the Parliament had been convened almost year by year as a great engine of justice and legislation, but Elizabeth recurred to the older jealousy of the two Houses which had been entertained by Edward the Fourth, Henry the Seventh, and Wolsey. Her Parliaments were summoned at intervals of never less than three, and sometimes of five years, and never save on urgent necessity. Practically, however, the royal power was wielded with a caution and moderation that showed the sense of a gathering difficulty in the full exercise of it. The ordinary course of justice was left undisturbed. The jurisdiction of the council was asserted almost exclusively over the Catholics, and defended in their case as a precaution against pressing dangers. The proclamations issued were temporary in character and of small importance. The two duties imposed were so slight as to pass almost unnoticed in the general satisfaction at Elizabeth's abstinence from internal taxation. She abandoned the benevolences and forced loans which had brought home the sense of tyranny to the subjects of her predecessors. She treated the Privy Seals, which on emergencies she issued for advances to her Exchequer, simply as anticipations of her revenue (like our own Exchequer Bills), and punctually repaid them. The monopolies with which she fettered trade proved a more serious grievance; but during her earlier reign they were looked on as a part of the system of Merchant Associa-

tions, which were at that time regarded as necessary for the regulation and protection of the growing commerce. Her thrift enabled her in ordinary times of peace to defray the current expenses of the Crown from its ordinary revenues. But the thrift was dictated not so much by economy as by the desire to avoid summoning fresh Parliaments. The queen saw that the "management" of the two Houses, so easy to Cromwell, was becoming harder every day. The rise of a new nobility, enriched by the spoils of the Church and trained to political life by the stress of events around them, was giving fresh vigor to the Lords. The increased wealth of the country gentry, as well as their growing desire to obtain a seat in the Commons, brought about the cessation at this time of the old practise of payment of members by their constituencies. A change too in the borough representation, which had long been in progress but was now for the first time legally recognized, tended greatly to increase the vigor and independence of the Lower House. The members for boroughs had been required by the terms of the older writs to be chosen from the body of the burgesses; and an act of Henry the Fifth gave this custom the force of law. But the passing of the act shows that the custom was already widely infringed; and by the time of Elizabeth most borough seats were filled by strangers, often nominees of the great landowners round, but for the most part men of wealth and blood, whose aim in entering Parliament was a purely political one, and whose attitude towards the Crown was far bolder and more independent than that of the quiet tradesmen who preceded them. So changed, indeed, was the tone of the Commons, even as early as the close of Henry's reign, that Edward and Mary both fell back on the prerogative of the Crown to create boroughs, and summoned members from fresh constituencies, which were often mere villages, and wholly in the hands of the Crown. But this "packing of the House" had still to be continued by their successor. The large number of such members whom Elizabeth called into the Commons, sixty-two in all, was a proof of the increasing difficulty which the Government found in securing a working majority.

Had Elizabeth lived in quiet times, her thrift would have saved her from the need of summoning Parliament at all.

But the perils of her reign drove her to renewed demands of subsidies, and at each demand the tone of the Houses rose higher and higher. Constitutionally the policy of Cromwell had had this special advantage, that at the very crisis of our liberties it had acknowledged and confirmed by repeated instances, for its own purposes of arbitrary rule, the traditional right of Parliament to grant subsidies, to enact laws, and to consider and petition for the redress of grievances. These rights remained, while the power which had turned them into a mere engine of despotism was growing weaker year by year. Not only did the Parliament of Elizabeth exercise its powers as fully as the Parliament of Cromwell, but the forces, political and religious, which she sought stubbornly to hold in check pressed on irresistibly, and soon led to the claiming of new privileges. In spite of the rarity of its assembling, in spite of high words and imprisonment and dexterous management, the Parliament quietly gained a power which, at her accession, the queen could never have dreamed of its possessing. Step by step the Lower House won the freedom of its members from arrest save by its own permission, the right of punishing and expelling members for crimes committed within the House, and of determining all matters relating to elections. The more important claim of freedom of speech brought on a series of petty conflicts which showed Elizabeth's instincts of despotism, as well as her sense of the new power which despotism had to face. In the great crisis of the Darnley marriage Mr. Dalton defied a royal prohibition to mention the subject of the succession by denouncing the claim of the Scottish queen. Elizabeth at once ordered him into arrest, but the Commons prayed for leave "to confer upon their liberties," and the queen ordered his release. In the same spirit she commanded Mr. Strickland, the mover of a bill for the reform of the Common Prayer, to appear no more in Parliament; but as soon as she perceived the House was bent upon his restoration, the command was withdrawn. On the other hand, the Commons still shrank from any consistent repudiation of Elizabeth's assumption of control over freedom of speech. The bold protest of Peter Wentworth against it was met by the House itself with his committal to the Tower; and the yet bolder question which he addressed to a later

Parliament, "Whether this council is not a place for every member of the same freely and without control, by bill or speech, to utter any of the griefs of the Commonwealth," brought on him a fresh imprisonment at the hands of the council, which lasted till the dissolution of the Parliament and with which the Commons declined to interfere. But while vacillating in its assertion of the rights of individual speakers, the House steadily asserted its claim to the wider powers which Cromwell's policy had given to parliamentary action. In theory the Tudor statesmen regarded three cardinal subjects, matters of trade, matters of religion, and matters of state, as lying exclusively within the competence of the Crown. But in actual fact such subjects had been treated by Parliament after Parliament. The whole religious fabric of the realm, the very title of Elizabeth, rested on parliamentary statutes. When the Houses petitioned at the outset of her reign for the declaration of a successor and for the queen's marriage, it was impossible to deny their right to intermeddle with these "matters of State," though she rebuked the demand and evaded an answer. But the question of the succession became too vital to English freedom and English religion to remain confined within Elizabeth's council-chamber. The Parliament which met in 1566 repeated the demand in a more imperative way. Her consciousness of the real dangers of such a request united with her arbitrary temper to move Elizabeth to a burst of passionate anger. The marriage indeed she promised, but she peremptorily forbade the subject of the succession to be approached. Wentworth at once rose in the Commons to know whether such a prohibition was not "against the liberties of Parliament"? and the question was followed by a hot debate. A fresh message from the queen commanded "that there should be no further argument," but the message was met by a request for freedom of deliberation. Elizabeth's prudence taught her that retreat was necessary; she protested that "she did not mean to prejudice any part of the liberties heretofore granted them"; she softened the order of silence into a request; and the Commons, won by the graceful concession to a loyal assent, received her message "most joyfully and with most hearty prayers and thanks for the same." But the victory was none the less a

real one. No such struggle had taken place between the Commons and the Crown since the beginning of the new Monarchy; and the struggle had ended in the virtual defeat of the Crown. It was the prelude to another claim equally galling to the queen. Though the constitution of the Church rested in actual fact on parliamentary enactments, Elizabeth, like the rest of the Tudor sovereigns, theoretically held her ecclesiastical supremacy to be a purely personal power, with her administration of which neither Parliament nor even her council had any right to interfere. But the exclusion of the Catholic gentry through the Test Acts, and the growth of Puritanism among the landowners as a class, gave more and more a Protestant tone to the Commons and to the council; and it was easy to remember that the supremacy which was thus jealously guarded from parliamentary interference had been conferred on the Crown by a parliamentary statute. Here, however, the queen, as the religious representative of the two parties who made up her subjects, stood on firmer ground than the Commons, who represented but one of them. And she used her advantage boldly. The bills proposed by the more advanced Protestants for the reform of the Common Prayer were at her command delivered up into her hands and suppressed. Wentworth, the most outspoken of his party, was, as we have seen, imprisoned in the Tower; and in a later Parliament the speaker was expressly forbidden to receive bills "for reforming the Church and transforming the Commonwealth." In spite of these obstacles, however, the effort for reform continued, and though crushed by the Crown or set aside by the Lords, ecclesiastical bills were presented in every Parliament. A better fortune awaited the Commons in their attack on the royal prerogative in matters of trade. Complaints made of the licenses and monopolies by which internal and external commerce were fettered were at first repressed by a royal reprimand as matters neither pertaining to the Commons nor within the compass of their understanding. When the subject was again stirred, nearly twenty years afterwards, Sir Edward Hoby was sharply rebuked by "a great personage" for his complaint of the illegal exactions made by the Exchequer. But the bill which he promoted was sent up to the Lords in spite of this, and at the close of

Elizabeth's reign the storm of popular indignation which had been roused by the growing grievance nerved the Commons to a decisive struggle. It was in vain that the ministers opposed the bill for the abolition of monopolies, and after four days of vehement debate the tact of Elizabeth taught her to give way. She acted with her usual ability, declared her previous ignorance of the existence of the evil, thanked the House for its interference, and quashed at a single blow every monopoly that she had granted.

Section VI. — The Armada, 1572–1588

The wonderful growth in wealth and social energy which we have described was accompanied by a remarkable change in the religious temper of the nation. Silently, almost unconsciously, England became Protestant, as the traditionary Catholicism which formed the religion of three fourths of the people at the queen's accession died quietly away. At the close of her reign the only parts of England where the old faith retained anything of its former vigor were the north and the extreme west, at that time the poorest and least populated parts of the kingdom. One main cause of the change lay undoubtedly in the gradual dying out of the Catholic priesthood and the growth of a new Protestant clergy who supplied their place. The older parish priests, though they had almost to a man acquiesced in the changes of ritual and doctrine which the various phases of the Reformation imposed upon them, remained in heart utterly hostile to its spirit. As Mary had undone the changes of Edward, they hoped for a Catholic successor to undo the changes of Elizabeth; and in the mean time they were content to wear the surplice instead of the chasuble, and to use the Communion office instead of the Mass book. But if they were forced to read the Homilies from the pulpit, the spirit of their teaching remained unchanged; and it was easy for them to cast contempt on the new services, till they seemed to old-fashioned worshipers a mere "Christmas game." But the lapse of twenty years did its work in emptying parsonage after parsonage. In 1579 the queen felt strong enough to enforce for the first time a general compliance with the Act of Uniform-

ity; and the jealous supervision of Parker and the bishops insured an inner as well as an outer conformity to the established faith in the clergy who took the place of the dying priesthood. The new parsons were for the most part not merely Protestant in belief and teaching, but ultra-Protestant. The old restrictions on the use of the pulpit were silently removed as the need for them passed away, and the zeal of the young ministers showed itself in an assiduous preaching which molded in their own fashion the religious ideas of the new generation. But their character had even a greater influence than their preaching. Under Henry the priests had for the most part been ignorant and sensual men; and the character of the clergy appointed by the greedy Protestants under Edward or in the first years of Elizabeth's reign was even worse than that of their Catholic rivals. But the energy of the successive primates, seconded as it was by the general increase of zeal and morality at the time, did its work; and by the close of Elizabeth's reign the moral temper as well as the social character of the clergy had greatly changed. Scholars like Hooker could now be found in the ranks of the priesthood, and the grosser scandals which disgraced the clergy as a body for the most part disappeared. It was impossible for a Puritan libeler to bring against the the ministers of Elizabeth's reign the charges of drunkenness and immorality which Protestant libelers had been able to bring against the priesthood of Henry's. But the influence of the new clergy was backed by a general revolution in English thought. We have already watched the first upgrowth of the new literature which was to find its highest types in Shakspere and Bacon. The grammar-schools were diffusing a new knowledge and mental energy through the middle classes and among the country gentry. The tone of the universities, no unfair test of the tone of the nation at large, changed wholly as the queen's reign went on. At its opening Oxford was "a nest of Papists," and sent its best scholars to feed the Catholic seminaries. At its close the university was a hotbed of Puritanism, where the fiercest tenets of Calvin reigned supreme. The movement was no doubt hastened by the political circumstances of the time. Under the rule of Elizabeth loyalty became more and more

a passion among Englishmen; and the bull of deposition placed Rome in the forefront of Elizabeth's foes. The conspiracies which festered around Mary were laid to the pope's charge; he was known to be pressing on France and on Spain the invasion and conquest of the heretic kingdom; he was soon to bless the Armada. Every day made it harder for a Catholic to reconcile Catholicism with loyalty to his queen or devotion to his country; and the mass of men, who are moved by sentiment rather than by reason, swung slowly round to the side which, whatever its religious significance might be, was the side of patriotism, of liberty against tyranny, of England against Spain. A new impulse was given to this silent drift of religious opinion by the atrocities which marked the Catholic triumph on the other side of the Channel. The horror of Alva's butcheries, or of the massacre in Paris on St. Bartholomew's day, revived the memories of the bloodshed under Mary. The tale of Protestant sufferings was told with a wonderful pathos and picturesqueness by John Foxe, an exile during the persecution; and his "Book of Martyrs," which was set up by royal order in the churches for public reading, passed from the churches to the shelves of every English household. The trading classes of the towns had been the first to embrace the doctrines of the Reformation, but their Protestantism became a passion as the refugees of the Continent brought to shop and market their tale of outrage and blood. Thousands of Flemish exiles found a refuge in the Cinque Ports, a third of the Antwerp merchants were seen pacing the new London Exchange, and a church of French Huguenots found a home which it still retains in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral.

In her ecclesiastical policy Elizabeth trusted mainly to time; and time, as we have seen, justified her trust. Her system of compromise both in faith and worship, of quietly replacing the old priesthood as it died out by Protestant ministers, of wearying recusants into at least outer conformity with the State religion and attendance on the State services by fines, — a policy aided, no doubt, by the moral influences we have described, — was gradually bringing England round to a new religious front. But the decay of Catholicism appealed strongly to the new spirit of Catholic zeal which, in

its despair of aid from Catholic princes, was now girding itself for its own bitter struggle with heresy. Dr. Allen, a scholar who had been driven from Oxford by the test prescribed by the Act of Uniformity, had foreseen the results of the dying out of the Marian priests, and had set up a seminary at Douay to supply their place. The new college, liberally supported by the Catholic peers, and supplied with pupils by a stream of refugees from Oxford and the English grammar-schools, soon landed its "seminary priests" on English shores; and few as they were at first, their presence was at once felt in the check which it gave to the gradual reconciliation of the Catholic gentry to the English Church. No check could have been more galling to Elizabeth, and her resentment was quickened by the sense of danger. She had accepted the bull of deposition as a declaration of war on the part of the papacy, and she viewed the Douay priests with some justice as its political emissaries. The comparative security of the Catholics from active persecution during the early part of her reign had arisen partly from the sympathy and connivance of the gentry who acted as justices of the peace, but still more from her own religious indifference. But the Test Act placed the magistracy in Protestant hands; and as Elizabeth passed from indifference to suspicion and from suspicion to terror, she put less restraint on the bigotry around her. In quitting Euston Hall, which she had visited in one of her pilgrimages, the queen gave its master, young Rookwood, thanks for his entertainment and her hand to kiss. "But my lord chamberlain nobly and gravely understanding that Rookwood was excommunicate" for non-attendance at church, "called him before him, demanded of him how he durst presume to attempt her royal presence, he unfit to accompany any Christian person, forthwith said that he was fitter for a pair of stocks, commanded him out of court, and yet to attend the council's pleasure." The council's pleasure was seen in his committal to the town prison at Norwich, while "seven more gentlemen of worship" were fortunate enough to escape with a simple sentence of arrest at their own homes. The queen's terror became a panic in the nation at large. The few priests who landed from Douay were multiplied into an army of papal emissaries despatched

to sow treason and revolt throughout the land. Parliament, which the working of the Test Act had made a wholly Protestant body, save for the presence of a few Catholics among the peers, was summoned to meet the new danger, and declared the landing of these priests and the harboring of them to be treason.

The act proved no idle menace; and the execution of Cuthbert Mayne, a young priest who was arrested in Cornwall with the papal bull of deposition hidden about him, gave a terrible indication of the character of the struggle upon which Elizabeth was about to enter. She was far, indeed, from any purpose of religious persecution; she boasted of her abstinence from any interference with men's consciences; and Cecil, in his official defense of her policy, while declaring freedom of worship to be incompatible with religious order, boldly asserted the right of every English subject to perfect freedom of religious opinion. To modern eyes there is something even more revolting than open persecution in the policy which branded every Catholic priest as a traitor, and all Catholic worship as disloyalty; but the first step towards toleration was won when the queen rested her system of repression on purely political grounds. If Elizabeth was a persecutor, she was the first English ruler who felt the charge of religious persecution to be a stigma on her rule. Nor can it be denied that there was a real political danger in the new missionaries. Allen was a restless conspirator, and the work of his seminary priests was meant to aid a new plan of the papacy for the conquest of England. And to the efforts of the seminary priests were now added those of Jesuit missionaries. A select few of the Oxford refugees at Douay joined the order of the Jesuits, whose members were already famous for their blind devotion to the will and judgments of Rome; and the two ablest and most eloquent of these exiles, Campian, once a fellow of St. John's, and Parsons, once a fellow of Balliol, were chosen as the heads of a Jesuit mission in England. For the moment their success was amazing. The eagerness shown to hear Campian was so great that in spite of the denunciations of the Government he was able to preach with hardly a show of concealment to a large audience at Smithfield. From London the

missionaries wandered in the disguise of captains or serving-men, sometimes even in the cassock of the English clergy, through many of the counties; and wherever they went the zeal of the Catholic gentry revived. The list of nobles reconciled to the old faith by these wandering apostles was headed by the name of Lord Oxford, Cecil's own son-in-law and the proudest among English peers.

The success of the Jesuits in undoing Elizabeth's work of compromise was shown in a more public way by the growing withdrawal of the Catholics from attendance at the worship of the English Church. The panic of the Protestants and of the Parliament outran even the real greatness of the danger. The little group of missionaries was magnified by popular fancy into a host of disguised Jesuits; and the invasion of this imaginary host was met by the seizure and torture of as many priests as the Government could lay hands on, the imprisonment of recusants, and the securing of the prominent Catholics throughout the country; and by statutes which prohibited the saying of Mass even in private houses, increased the fine on recusants to twenty pounds a month, and enacted that "all persons pretending to any power of absolving subjects from their allegiance, or practising to withdraw them to the Romish religion, with all persons after the present session willingly so absolved or reconciled to the see of Rome, shall be guilty of high treason." The way in which the vast powers conferred on the Crown by this statute were used by Elizabeth was not only characteristic in itself, but important as at once defining the policy to which, in theory at least, her successors adhered for more than a hundred years. Few laymen were brought to the bar and none to the block under its provisions. The oppression of the Catholic gentry was limited to an exaction, more or less rigorous at different times, of the fines for recusancy or non-attendance at public worship. The work of bloodshed was reserved wholly for priests, and under Elizabeth this work was done with a ruthless energy which for the moment crushed the Catholic reaction. The Jesuits were tracked by pursuivants and spies, dragged from their hiding-places, and sent in batches to the Tower. So hot was the pursuit that Parsons was forced to fly across the Channel; while Campian was brought a prisoner through the streets of

London amidst the howling of the mob, and placed at the bar on the charge of treason. "Our religion only is our crime," was a plea which galled his judges; but the political danger of the Jesuit preaching was disclosed in his evasion of any direct reply when questioned as to his belief in the validity of the excommunication and deposition of the queen by the papal see. The death of Campian was the prelude to a steady, pitiless effort at the extermination of his class. If we adopt the Catholic estimate of the time, the twenty years which followed saw the execution of two hundred priests, while a yet greater number perished in the filthy and fever-stricken jails into which they were plunged. The work of reconciliation to Rome was arrested by this ruthless energy; but, on the other hand, the work which the priests had effected could not be undone. The system of quiet compulsion and conciliation to which Elizabeth had trusted for the religious reunion of her subjects was foiled; and the English Catholics, fined, imprisoned at every crisis of national danger, and deprived of their teachers by the prison and the gibbet, were severed more hopelessly than ever from the national Church. A fresh impulse was thus given to the growing current of opinion which was to bring England at last to recognize the right of every man to freedom both of conscience and of worship. What Protestantism had first done under Mary, Catholicism was doing under Elizabeth. It was deepening the sense of personal religion. It was revealing in men who had cowered before the might of kingship a power greater than the might of kings. It was breaking the spell which the monarchy had laid on the imagination of the people. The Crown ceased to seem irresistible before a passion for religious and political liberty which gained vigor from the dungeon of the Catholic priest as from that of the Protestant zealot.

But if a fierce religious struggle was at hand, men felt that behind this lay a yet fiercer political struggle. Philip's hosts were looming over sea, and the horrors of foreign invasion seemed about to be added to the horrors of civil war. Spain was at this moment the mightiest of European powers. The discoveries of Columbus had given it the New World of the West; the conquests of Cortez and Pizarro poured into its

treasury the plunder of Mexico and Peru; its galleons brought the rich produce of the Indies, their gold, their jewels, their ingots of silver, to the harbor of Cadiz. To the New World its king added the fairest and wealthiest portion of the old; he was master of Naples and Milan, the richest and most fertile districts of Italy; of the busy provinces of the Low Countries, of Flanders, the great manufacturing district of the time, and of Antwerp, which had become the central mart for the commerce of the world. His native kingdom, poor as it was, supplied him with the steadiest and the most daring soldiers that the world had seen since the fall of the Roman empire. The renown of the Spanish infantry had been growing from the day when it flung off the onset of the French chivalry on the field of Ravenna; and the Spanish generals stood without rivals in their military skill, as they stood without rivals in their ruthless cruelty. The whole, too, of this enormous power was massed in the hands of a single man. Served as he was by able statesmen and subtle diplomatists, Philip of Spain was his own sole minister; laboring day after day, like a clerk, through the long years of his reign, amidst the papers which crowded his closet; but resolute to let nothing pass without his supervision, and to suffer nothing to be done save by his express command. It was his boast that everywhere in the vast compass of his dominions he was "an absolute king." It was to realize this idea of unshackled power that he crushed the liberties of Aragon, as his father had crushed the liberties of Castile, and sent Alva to tread underfoot the constitutional freedom of the Low Countries. His bigotry went hand in hand with his thirst for rule. Italy and Spain lay hushed beneath the terror of the Inquisition, while Flanders was being purged of heresy by the stake and the sword. The shadow of this gigantic power fell like a deadly blight over Europe. The new Protestantism, like the new spirit of political liberty, saw its real foe in Philip. It was Spain, rather than the Guises, against which Coligni and the Huguenots struggled in vain; it was Spain with which William of Orange was wrestling for religious and civil freedom; it was Spain which was soon to plunge Germany into the chaos of the Thirty Years' war, and to which the Catholic world had for twenty years been

looking, and looking in vain, for a victory over heresy in England. Vast in fact as Philip's resources were, they were drained by the yet vaster schemes of ambition into which his religion and his greed of power, as well as the wide distribution of his dominions, perpetually drew him. To coerce the weaker states of Italy, to command the Mediterranean, to preserve his influence in Germany, to support Catholicism in France, to crush heresy in Flanders, to despatch one Armada against the Turk and another against Elizabeth, were aims mighty enough to exhaust even the power of the Spanish monarchy. But it was rather on the character of Philip than on the exhaustion of his treasury that Elizabeth counted for success in the struggle which had so long been going on between them. The king's temper was slow, cautious even to timidity, losing itself continually in delays, in hesitations, in anticipating remote perils, in waiting for distant chances; and on the slowness and hesitation of his temper his rival had been playing ever since she mounted the throne. The diplomatic contest between the two was like the fight which England was soon to see between the ponderous Spanish galleon and the light pinnace of the buccaneers. The agility, the sudden changes of Elizabeth, her lies, her mystifications, though they failed to deceive Philip, puzzled and impeded his mind. But amidst all this cloud of intrigue the actual course of their relations had been clear and simple. In her earlier days France rivaled Spain in its greatness, and Elizabeth simply played the two rivals off against one another. She hindered France from giving effective aid to Mary Stuart by threats of an alliance with Spain; while she induced Philip to wink at her heresy, and to discourage the risings of the English Catholics, by playing on his dread of her alliance with France. But as the tide of religious passion which had so long been held in check broke at last over its banks, the political face of Europe changed. The Low Countries, driven to despair by the greed and persecution of Alva, rose in a revolt which after strange alternations of fortune gave to Europe the Republic of the United Provinces. The opening which their rising afforded was seized by the Huguenot leaders of France as a political engine to break the power which Catherine of Medicis exercised over Charles

the Ninth, and to set aside her policy of religious balance by placing France at the head of Protestantism in the West. Charles listened to the counsels of Coligni, who pressed for war upon Philip and promised the support of the Huguenots in an invasion of the Low Countries. Never had a fairer prospect opened to French ambition. Catherine, however, saw ruin for the monarchy in a France at once Protestant and free. She threw herself on the side of the Guises, and insured their triumph by lending herself to their massacre of the Protestants on St. Bartholomew's day. But though the long-gathering clouds of religious hatred had broken, Elizabeth trusted to her dexterity to keep out of the storm. France plunged madly back into a chaos of civil war, and the Low Countries were left to cope single-handed with Spain. Whatever enthusiasm the heroic struggle of the Prince of Orange excited among her subjects, it failed to move Elizabeth even for an instant from the path of cold self-interest. To her the revolt of the Netherlands was simply "a bridle of Spain, which kept war out of our own gate." At the darkest moment of the contest, when Alva had won back all but Holland and Zealand, and even William of Orange despaired, the queen bent her energies to prevent him from finding succor in France. That the provinces could in the end withstand Philip, neither she nor any English statesmen believed. They held that the struggle must close either in utter subjection of the Netherlands, or in their selling themselves for aid to France; and the accession of power which either result must give to one of her two Catholic foes the queen was eager to avert. Her plan for averting it was by forcing the provinces to accept the terms offered by Spain — a restoration, that is, of their constitutional privileges on condition of their submission to the Church. Peace on such a footing would not only restore English commerce, which suffered from the war; it would leave the Netherlands still formidable as a weapon against Philip. The freedom of the provinces would be saved; and the religious question involved in a fresh submission to the yoke of Catholicism was one which Elizabeth was incapable of appreciating. To her the steady refusal of William the Silent to sacrifice his faith was as unintelligible as the steady bigotry of Philip in de-

manding such a sacrifice. It was of more immediate consequence that Philip's anxiety to avoid provoking an intervention on the part of England which would destroy all hope of his success in Flanders left her tranquil at home. Had revolt in England prospered, he was ready to reap the fruits of other men's labors; and he made no objection to plots for the seizure or assassination of the queen. But his stake was too vast to risk an attack while she sat firmly on her throne; and the cry of the English Catholics, or the pressure of the pope, had as yet failed to drive the Spanish king into strife with Elizabeth.

The control of events was however passing from the hands of statesmen and diplomatists; and the long period of suspense which their policy had won was ending in the clash of national and political passions. The rising fanaticism of the Catholic world was breaking down the caution and hesitation of Philip, while England set aside the balanced neutrality of her queen and pushed boldly forward to a contest which it felt to be inevitable. The public opinion, to which the queen was so sensitive, took every day a bolder and more decided tone. Her cold indifference to the heroic struggle in Flanders was more than compensated by the enthusiasm it excited among the nation at large. The earlier Flemish refugees found a refuge in the Cinque Ports. The exiled merchants of Antwerp were welcomed by the merchants of London. While Elizabeth dribbled out her secret aid to the Prince of Orange, the London traders sent him half a million from their own purses, a sum equal to a year's revenue of the Crown. Volunteers stole across the Channel in increasing numbers to the aid of the Dutch, till the five hundred Englishmen who fought in the beginning of the struggle rose to a brigade of five thousand, whose bravery turned one of the most critical battles of the war. Dutch privateers found shelter in English ports, and English vessels hoisted the flag of the States for a dash at the Spanish traders. Protestant fervor rose steadily as "the best captains and soldiers" returned from the campaigns in the Low Countries to tell of Alva's atrocities, or as privateers brought back tales of English seamen who had been seized in Spain and the New World, to linger amidst the tortures of the Inquisition, or to die in its fires. In

the presence of this steady drift of popular passion the diplomacy of Elizabeth became of little moment. When she sought to put a check on Philip by one of her last matrimonial intrigues, which threatened England with a Catholic sovereign in the Duke of Anjou, a younger son of the hated Catherine of Medicis, the popular indignation rose suddenly into a cry against "a popish king" which the queen dared not defy. If Elizabeth was resolute for peace, England was resolute for war. A new courage had arisen since the beginning of her reign, when Cecil and the queen stood alone in their belief in England's strength, and when the diplomatists of Europe regarded her obstinate defiance of Philip's counsels as "madness." The whole people had caught the self-confidence and daring of their queen. The seamen of the southern coast had long been carrying on a half-piratical war on their own account. Four years after Elizabeth's accession the Channel swarmed with "sea-dogs," as they were called, who sailed under letters of marque from the Prince of Condé and the Huguenot leaders and took heed neither of the complaints of the French court nor of Elizabeth's own attempts at repression. Her efforts failed before the connivance of every man along the coast, of the very port officers of the Crown, who made profit out of the spoil, and of the gentry of the west, who were hand and glove with the adventurers. They broke above all against the national craving for open fight with Spain, and the Protestant craving for open fight with Catholicism. Young Englishmen crossed the sea to serve under Condé or Henry of Navarre. The war in the Netherlands drew hundreds of Protestants to the field. The suspension of the French contest only drove the sea-dogs to the West Indies, for the papal decree which gave the New World to Spain, and the threats of Philip against any Protestant who should visit its seas, fell idly on the ears of English seamen. It was in vain that their trading vessels were seized, and the sailors flung into the dungeons of the Inquisition, "laden with irons, without sight of sun or moon." The profits of the trade were large enough to counteract its perils; and the bigotry of Philip was met by a bigotry as merciless as his own. The Puritanism of the sea-dogs went hand in hand with their love of adventure. To break through the Catholic

monopoly of the New World, to kill Spaniards, to sell negroes, to sack gold ships, were in these men's minds a seemly work for the "elect of God." The name of Francis Drake became the terror of the Spanish Indies. In Drake a Protestant fanaticism was united with a splendid daring. He conceived the design of penetrating into the Pacific, whose waters had never seen an English flag; and backed by a little company of adventurers, he set sail for the southern seas in a vessel hardly as big as a channel schooner, with a few yet smaller companions, who fell away before the storms and perils of the voyage. But Drake with his one ship and eighty men held boldly on, and passing the Straits of Magellan, untraversed as yet by any Englishman, swept the unguarded coast of Chile and Peru, loaded his bark with the gold-dust and silver ingots of Potosi, and with the pearls, emeralds, and diamonds which formed the cargo of the great galleon that sailed once a year from Lima to Cadiz. With spoils of above half a million in value the daring adventurer steered undauntedly for the Moluccas, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and after completing the circuit of the globe dropped anchor again in Plymouth harbor.

The romantic daring of Drake's voyage, as well as the vastness of his spoil, roused a general enthusiasm throughout England. But the welcome he received from Elizabeth on his return was accepted by Philip as an outrage which could only be expiated by war. Sluggish as it was, the blood of the Spanish king was fired at last by the defiance with which Elizabeth received all demands for redress. She met a request for Drake's surrender by knighting the freebooter, and by wearing in her crown the jewels he had offered her as a present. When the Spanish ambassador threatened that "matters would come to the cannon," she replied "quietly, in her most natural voice, as if she were telling a common story," wrote Mendoza, "that if I used threats of that kind she would fling me into a dungeon." Outraged as Philip was, she believed that with the Netherlands still in revolt and France longing for her alliance to enable it to seize them, the king could not afford to quarrel with her. But the sense of personal wrong, and the outcry of the Catholic world against his selfish reluctance to avenge the blood of its

martyrs, at last told on the Spanish king, and the first vessels of an armada which was destined for the conquest of England began to gather in the Tagus. Resentment and fanaticism indeed were backed by a cool policy. His conquest of Portugal had almost doubled his power. It gave him the one navy that as yet rivaled his own. With the Portuguese colonies his flag claimed mastery in the Indian and the Pacific seas, as it claimed mastery in the Atlantic and Mediterranean; and he had now to shut Englishman and heretic not only out of the New World of the West but out of the lucrative traffic with the East. In the Netherlands, too, and in France all seemed to go well for Philip's schemes. His forces under Parma had steadily won their way in the Low Countries, and a more fatal blow had been dealt at his rebellious subjects in the assassination of William of Orange; while all danger of French intervention passed away with the death of the Duke of Anjou, which left Henry of Navarre, the leader of the Huguenot party, heir of the crown of France. To prevent the triumph of heresy in the succession of a Protestant king, the Guises and the French Catholics rose at once in arms; but the Holy League which they formed rested mainly on the support of Philip, and so long as he supplied them with men and money, he was secure on the side of France. It was at this moment that Parma won his crowning triumph in the capture of Antwerp; its fall after a gallant resistance convinced even Elizabeth of the need for action if the one "bridle to Spain which kept war out of our own gate" was to be saved. Lord Leicester was hurried to the Flemish coast with 8000 men. In a yet bolder spirit of defiance Francis Drake was suffered to set sail with a fleet of twenty-five vessels for the Spanish Main. Drake's voyage was a series of triumphs. The wrongs inflicted on English seamen by the Inquisition were requited by the burning of the cities of St. Domingo and Carthagena. The coasts of Cuba and Florida were plundered, and though the gold fleet escaped him, Drake returned with a heavy booty. But only one disastrous skirmish at Zutphen, the fight in which Sidney fell, broke the inaction of Leicester's forces, while Elizabeth strove vainly to use the presence of his army to negotiate a peace between Philip and the States. Meanwhile dangers thick-

ened round her in England itself. Maddened by persecution, by the hopelessness of rebellion within or of deliverance from without, the fiercer Catholics listened to schemes of assassination to which the murder of William of Orange lent a terrible significance. The detection of Somerville, a fanatic who had received the Host before setting out for London "to shoot the queen with his dagg," was followed by measures of natural severity, by the flight and arrest of Catholic gentry and peers, by a vigorous purification of the Inns of Court, where a few Catholics lingered, and by the despatch of fresh batches of priests to the block. The trial and death of Parry, a member of the House of Commons who had served in the queen's household, on a similar charge, fed the general panic. Parliament met in a transport of horror and loyalty. All Jesuits and seminary priests were banished from the realm on pain of death. A bill for the security of the queen disqualified any claimant of the succession who instigated subjects to rebellion or hurt to the queen's person from ever succeeding to the Crown. The threat was aimed at Mary Stuart. Weary of her long restraint, of her failure to rouse Philip or Scotland to aid her, of the baffled revolt of the English Catholics and the baffled intrigues of the Jesuits, she had bent for a moment to submission. "Let me go," she wrote to Elizabeth; "let me retire from this island to some solitude where I may prepare my soul to die. Grant this, and I will sign away every right which either I or mine can claim." But the cry was useless, and her despair found a new and more terrible hope in the plots against Elizabeth's life. She knew and approved the vow of Anthony Babington and a band of young Catholics, for the most part connected with the royal household, to kill the queen; but plot and approval alike passed through Walsingham's hands, and the seizure of Mary's correspondence revealed her guilt. In spite of her protest a Commission of Peers sat as her judges at Fotheringay Castle; and their verdict of "guilty" annihilated under the provisions of the recent statute her claim to the Crown. The streets of London blazed with bonfires, and peals rang out from steeple to steeple at the news of her condemnation; but, in spite of the prayer of Parliament for her execution, and the pressure of the council, Elizabeth

shrank from her death. The force of public opinion, however, was now carrying all before it, and the unanimous demand of her people wrested at last a sullen consent from the queen. She flung the warrant signed upon the floor, and the council took on themselves the responsibility of executing it. Mary died on a scaffold which was erected in the castle hall at Fotheringay as dauntlessly as she had lived. "Do not weep," she said to her ladies, "I have given my word for you." "Tell my friends," she charged Melville, "that I die a good Catholic."

The blow was hardly struck before Elizabeth turned with fury on the ministers who had forced her hand. Cecil, who had now become Lord Burleigh, was for a while disgraced; and Davison, who carried the warrant to the council, was flung into the Tower to atone for an act which shattered the policy of the queen. The death of Mary Stuart in fact seemed to remove the last obstacle out of Philip's way, by putting an end to the divisions of the English Catholics. To him, as to the nearest heir in blood who was of the Catholic faith, Mary bequeathed her rights to the Crown, and the hopes of her adherents were from that moment bound up in the success of Spain. Philip no longer needed pressure to induce him to act. Drake's triumph had taught him that the conquest of England was needful for the security of his dominion in the New World. The presence of an English army in Flanders convinced him that the road to the conquest of the States lay through England itself. The operations of Parma therefore in the Low Countries were suspended with a view to the greater enterprise. Vessels and supplies for the fleet which had for three years been gathering in the Tagus were collected from every port of the Spanish coast. Only the dread of a counter attack from France, where the fortunes of the League were wavering, held Philip back. But the news of the coming Armada called Drake again to action. He set sail with thirty small barks, burned the storeships and galleys in the harbor of Cadiz, stormed the ports of the Faro, and was only foiled in his aim of attacking the Armada itself by orders from home. A descent upon Corunna however completed what Drake called his "singeing of the Spanish king's beard." Elizabeth used the daring blow to back her

negotiations for peace; but the Spanish pride had been touched to the quick. Amidst the exchange of protocols Parma gathered seventeen thousand men for the coming invasion, collected a fleet of flat-bottomed transports at Dunkirk, and waited impatiently for the Armada to protect his crossing. But the attack of Drake, the death of its first admiral, and the winter storms delayed the fleet from sailing. The fear of France held it back yet more effectually; but in the spring Philip's patience was rewarded. The League was triumphant, and the king a prisoner in its hands. The Armada at once set sail from Lisbon, but it had hardly started when a gale in the Bay of Biscay drove its scattered vessels into Ferrol. It was only on the nineteenth of July that the sails of the Armada were seen from the Lizard, and the English beacons flared out their alarm along the coast. The news found England ready. An army was mustering under Leicester at Tilbury, the militia of the midland counties were gathering to London, while those of the south and east were held in readiness to meet a descent on either shore. Had Parma landed on the earliest day he purposed, he would have found his way to London barred by a force stronger than his own, a force too of men in whose ranks were many who had already crossed pikes on equal terms with his best infantry in Flanders. "When I shall have landed," he warned his master, "I must fight battle after battle, I shall lose men by wounds and disease, I must leave detachments behind me to keep open my communications; and in a short time the body of my army will become so weak that not only I may be unable to advance in the face of the enemy, and time may be given to the heretics and your Majesty's other enemies to interfere, but there may fall out some notable inconveniences, with the loss of everything, and I be unable to remedy it." Even had Parma landed, in fact, the only real chance of Spanish success lay in a Catholic rising; and at this crisis patriotism proved stronger than religious fanaticism in the hearts of the English Catholics. Catholic lords brought their vessels up alongside of Drake and Lord Howard, and Catholic gentry led their tenantry to the muster at Tilbury. But to secure a landing at all, the Spaniards had to be masters of the Channel; and in the Channel lay an English

fleet resolved to struggle hard for the mastery. As the Armada sailed on in a broad crescent past Plymouth, moving towards its point of junction with Parma at Calais, the vessels which had gathered under Lord Howard of Effingham slipped out of the bay and hung with the wind upon their rear. In numbers the two forces were strangely unequal; the English fleet counted only 80 vessels against the 149 which composed the Armada. In size of ships the disproportion was even greater. Fifty of the English vessels, including the squadron of the lord admiral and the craft of the volunteers, were little bigger than yachts of the present day. Even of the thirty queen's ships which formed its main body, there were only four which equaled in tonnage the smallest of the Spanish galleons. Sixty-five of these galleons formed the most formidable half of the Spanish fleet; and four galleys, four galleasses, armed with fifty guns apiece, fifty-six armed merchantmen, and twenty pinnaces, made up the rest. The Armada was provided with 2500 cannons, and a vast store of provisions; it had on board 8000 seamen, and more than 20,000 soldiers; and if a court favorite, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, had been placed at its head, he was supported by the ablest staff of naval officers which Spain possessed. Small however as the English ships were, they were in perfect trim; they sailed two feet for the Spaniards' one, they were manned with 9000 hardy seamen, and their admiral was backed by a crowd of captains who had won fame in the Spanish seas. With him was Hawkins, who had been the first to break into the charmed circle of the West Indies; Frobisher, the hero of the Northwest passage; and above all Drake, who held command of the privateers. They had won too the advantage of the wind, and, closing in or drawing off as they would, the lightly handled English vessels, which fired four shots to the Spaniards' one, hung boldly on the rear of the great fleet as it moved along the Channel. "The feathers of the Spaniard," in the phrase of the English seamen, were "plucked one by one." Galleon after galleon was sunk, boarded, driven on shore; and yet Medina Sidonia failed in bringing his pursuers to a close engagement. Now halting, now moving slowly on, the running fight between the two fleets lasted throughout the week, till the Armada dropped anchor in Calais roads.

The time had now come for sharper work if the junction of the Armada with Parma was to be prevented; for, demoralized as the Spaniards had been by the merciless chase, their loss in ships had not been great, while, though the numbers of English ships had grown, their supplies of food and ammunition were fast running out. Howard resolved to force an engagement, and, firing eight fire-ships at midnight, sent them down with the tide upon the Spanish line. The galleons at once cut their cables, and stood out in panic to sea, drifting with the wind in a long line off Gravelines. Drake resolved at all costs to prevent their return. At dawn the English ships closed fairly in, and almost their last cartridge was spent ere the sun went down. Three great galleons had sunk, three had drifted helplessly on to the Flemish coast; but the bulk of the Spanish vessels remained, and even to Drake the fleet seemed "wonderful great and strong." Within the Armada itself, however, all hope was gone. Huddled together by the wind and the deadly English fire, their sails torn, their masts shot away, the crowded galleons had become mere slaughter-houses. Four thousand men had fallen, and bravely as the seamen fought they were cowed by the terrible butchery. Medina himself was in despair. "We are lost, Señor Oquenda," he cried to his bravest captain; "what are we to do?" "Let others talk of being lost," replied Oquenda, "your Excellency has only to order up fresh cartridge." But Oquenda stood alone, and a council of war resolved on retreat to Spain by the one course open, that of a circuit round the Orkneys. "Never anything pleased me better," wrote Drake, "than seeing the enemy fly with a southerly wind to the northwards. Have a good eye to the Prince of Parma, for, with the grace of God, if we like, I doubt not ere it be long so to handle the matter with the Duke of Sidonia, as he shall wish himself at St. Mary Port among his orange trees." But the work of destruction was reserved for a mightier foe than Drake. Supplies fell short and the English vessels were forced to give up the chase; but the Spanish ships which remained had no sooner reached the Orkneys than the storms of the northern seas broke on them with a fury before which all concert and union disappeared. Fifty reached Corunna, bearing ten thousand men stricken

with pestilence and death. Of the rest some were sunk, some dashed to pieces against the Irish cliffs. The wreckers of the Orkneys and the Faroes, the clansmen of the Scottish Isles, the kerns of Donegal and Galway, all had their part in the work of murder and robbery. Eight thousand Spaniards perished between the Giant's Causeway and the Blaskets. On a strand near Sligo an English captain numbered eleven hundred corpses which had been cast up by the sea. The flower of the Spanish nobility, who had been sent on the new crusade under Alonzo da Leyva, after twice suffering shipwreck, put a third time to sea to founder on a reef near Dunluce.

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